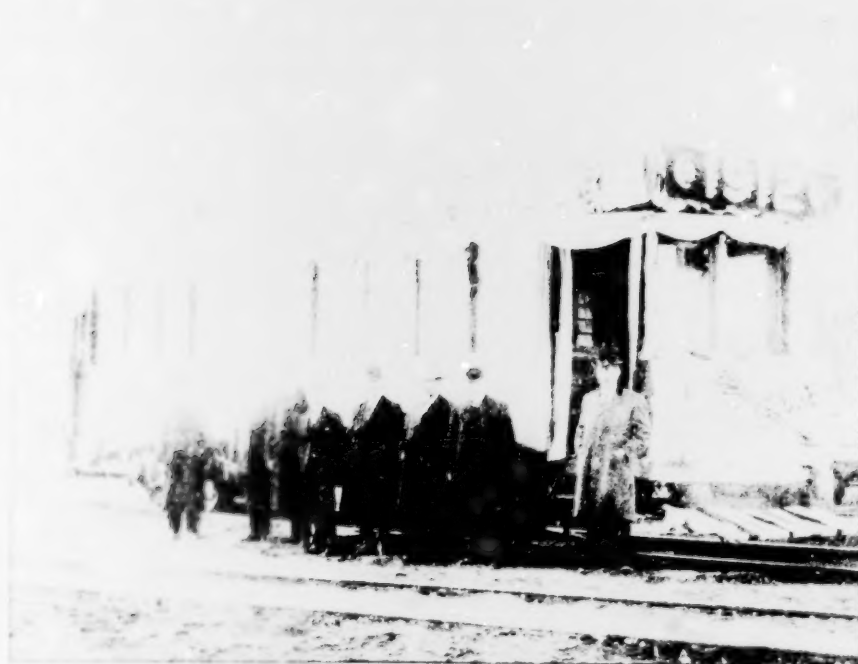


CANADIAN PLAINS STUDIES #10



TOWN AND CITY

ASPECTS OF WESTERN
CANADIAN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

ALAN F.J. ARTIBISE

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TOWN AND CITY

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**ASPECTS OF WESTERN CANADIAN
URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**edited,
with introductions by
ALAN F. J. ARTIBISE**

**CANADIAN PLAINS STUDIES ■ 10
L. G. CROSSMAN, GENERAL EDITOR OF OCCASIONAL PUBLICATIONS**

**CANADIAN PLAINS RESEARCH CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
1981**

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Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Main entry under title:

Town and city

(Canadian plains studies, ISSN 0317-6290 ; 10

Bibliography: p.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-88977-021-2

**1. Cities and towns - Canada, Western - History. 2. Cities and towns -
Canada, Western - Growth. 3. Urbanization - Canada, Western -
History. I. Artibise, Alan F. J., 1946- II. University of Regina.
Canadian Plains Research Center. III. Series
HT127.T69 307.7'6'09712 C81-091022-5**

**Canadian Plains Research Center
University of Regina
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0A2**

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For
LEWIS HERBERT THOMAS

PREFACE

The editor of a volume of essays faces both a series of difficult questions and a number of splendid opportunities. In a single volume covering a broadly defined subject, the problem of what to include and what to exclude is especially difficult. This issue was approached in this instance by adopting several criteria. First, all the essays were to be original contributions, prepared especially for this volume. Second, the essays had to be based on extensive research and written with a view to placing local issues in a larger framework. Third, all the contributions were to deal with locales, themes, and periods that had not already received extensive treatment elsewhere. The result is a volume which brings together some of the most talented scholars working in the field of western Canadian urban studies. Many of the authors are young and their work is drawn from recent research on B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. theses; other contributors are senior scholars who bring to the volume the wisdom of many years of study and reflection on western Canada.

The application of these criteria also meant that several important areas of western urban history are not covered. While, at first, I intended to supplement the volume with a detailed bibliography on western Canadian urban studies, I decided that, for the most part, this would be a redundant exercise. Urban studies are well covered in my recent bibliography, *Western Canada Since 1870: A Select Bibliography and Guide* (UBC Press, 1978). Also, western urban development receives even more extensive and up-to-date treatment in Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, *Canada's Urban Past: A Bibliography and Guide* (UBC Press, 1981). Furthermore, and happily, much of the recent work in this area has been completed by contributors to this book. I have, however, prepared a short bibliographic note to direct the reader to important literature in the field.

While the success I have had in dealing with editing problems will be determined by readers, I must point out that I have found the exercise exhilarating. The role of editor of a volume of essays is sometimes an envious one, particularly when the essays are all concerned with one's own area of study. I have learned much from the experience, having had the opportunity to work with an exceptionally fine group of scholars. The exchanges between editor and authors have been

frequent but productive; I only hope that the individual authors found the experience as worthwhile as I did.

In addition to the contributors, I am indebted to a number of other people who, in a variety of ways, have made this book possible. June Belton typed the manuscript with her usual efficiency and skill and speeded along the entire process. Two research assistants—Bruce Kilpatrick and June Bouchard—helped with the compilation of the statistical appendix. And the staff of the Canadian Plains Research Center, especially Barbara Jones, not only encouraged the publication of this volume but made many useful suggestions and revisions before the final version went to the printer.

It remains only to dedicate this book. In the course of my own research on western Canadian urban history, I came across an unpublished paper read to the Morton Historical Society in Saskatoon in November 1944. The paper dealt with Saskatoon from 1883 to 1914 and was written in a style and dealt with themes in a manner that was not adopted generally by "local" historians until the 1970s. It was, in short, a paper that should have had a wide audience. Instead, it found a quiet resting place in the Saskatchewan Archives. It is a tribute to the paper's author, however, that more than thirty-five years later the paper is finally being published, in a revised form, together with work of much more recent vintage. It is with much respect that this volume is dedicated to the author of that paper, Lewis Herbert Thomas.

Alan F. J. Artibise
Department of History
University of Victoria

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The field of Canadian urban studies has grown dramatically in the last decade. The reasons for this phenomenon are numerous and have been examined in some detail.¹ But while there has been considerable growth, the field of urban studies in Canada is still undeveloped. There are many gaps in our knowledge of different regions, time periods, and themes. This volume is designed to fill some of these gaps by enlarging the still prevalent view of the agrarian Canadian West so as to include an urban dimension.

The need for an assessment of the urban dimension of western Canadian development is obvious. Recent reviews of western Canadian history indicate that urban studies have not yet achieved a place of equality beside such areas as political, ethnic, native, or labour history.² One of the main reasons for this is that unlike these areas of study, the writing of urban history most often begins with a local situation, and local history, unfortunately, rarely attracts the attention of professional scholars. Many of the studies of western towns and cities are primarily accounts of local events with an emphasis on the greatness of community achievements. Often written to commemorate an anniversary, these pleasant volumes usually do not go beyond the chronicling of events. The authors rarely ask meaningful questions about urbanization, content through elaborate accounts of the first settlers to establish ties with a glorious past. This is not to deny that these volumes are useful in the search for historical understanding; they are. The 'antiquarian' writers base their work on the assumption that specific towns and cities have distinct personalities, and this is a tradition that still has value. As well, these studies serve as valuable sources. They provide an outline of past events and thus a place to begin study. Any professional scholar interested in a given community has a marked advantage if he finds one or more accounts prepared by the local anniversary committee or by other groups or individuals.

For all its value, however, antiquarian local history remains parochial; and in an age when the purpose of history is no longer to glorify the past but to enable a society to understand itself, new approaches are necessary. A more sophisticated methodology must be adopted, one that includes more interpretation and analysis of historical events, exploration into the causes of social change, the study of the relation-

ship among the several dimensions of human experience (political, economic, social, demographic, and spatial), and the use of the relevant tools and concepts developed by the social sciences. In addition, the urban historian has to be concerned with the historical process of urbanization, "a process which envelopes an enormous range of places, not only within one country, but across the face of the globe."³ The challenge is to relate this complex process to the specific experience of particular places; to use the particularity of the place to illustrate the generalities of the process and vice-versa. Urban historians must take a town or city and explain its present condition in terms of the historical forces that have put it there, thus providing a measure of understanding of the way in which people attempt to order their lives and to participate in the decisions that give a particular place a style, form, and direction. In this way local history ceases to be parochial and becomes part of a larger story.

In western Canadian terms, the study of towns and cities serves many purposes. It not only broadens our understanding of the general process of urbanization, but it also deepens our appreciation of the complexities of regional development. The urban frontier was one of the vital elements in Canada's western expansion. Towns and cities introduced a dynamic and aggressive element into the West and played a key role in transforming a sparsely settled fur-trading expanse into a settled and well-integrated region. In this process, the interdependent relationship of city and countryside was clearly evident.⁴ The rapidity and degree of urbanization was closely tied to agricultural and transportation technology, for the very existence of towns and cities depended upon the ability of the agrarian population to produce a surplus beyond its immediate needs and to get the product to markets. But it was the urban centres that were the driving forces in the dramatic changes that occurred in the Canadian West in the decades following Confederation.

While all the essays in this book focus specifically on selected towns and cities to provide detail, the emphasis is on a broader framework which will, it is hoped, provide guidance and insight for future studies. Many of the contributors are careful to illustrate the provincial, regional, national, and, at times, international linkages involved in western urban development. Others use a comparative approach, enabling the reader to assess western urbanization beyond the particularistic context of a single town or city.

The essays in this volume by no means exhaust all the possibilities for research in western urban studies, but the themes covered are of considerable importance: the economic framework in which western urban growth occurred, the establishment and development of towns,

and the emergence of cities—their origins, patterns of growth, character, and the nature of urban society. While the ultimate shape of the urban dimension of western Canadian development does not emerge from these essays—if indeed it ever will—the authors certainly cover much new ground and provide a good deal of data to use in a re-mapping of western history. If nothing else, western history should, in the future, accept the integral role played by towns and cities in the development of the region.

NOTES

- ¹ The best analysis is Gilbert A. Stelter, "A Sense of Time and Place: The Historian's Approach to Canada's Urban Past," in Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 420-41. Other useful examinations of the field are J. T. Lemon, "The Study of the Urban Past: Approaches by Geographers," Canadian Historical Association, *Historical Papers* 1973, pp. 179-90; John Weaver, "Living in and Building up the Canadian City: A Review of Studies on the Urban Past," *Plan Canada*, Vol. 15 (September 1975), pp. 111-17; Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, "Urban History Comes of Age: A Review of Current Research," *City Magazine*, Vol. 3 (October 1977), pp. 22-36; Gilbert A. Stelter, "Urban History in Canada," *The History and Social Science Teacher*, Vol. 14 (Spring 1979), pp. 185-94; John Weaver, "Urban Canada: Recent Historical Writing," *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol. 86 (1979), pp. 75-97; and Gilbert A. Stelter, "Current Research in Canadian Urban History," *Urban History Review*, Vol. IX (June, 1980), pp. 110-28. For a comprehensive bibliography see Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, *Canada's Urban Past: A Bibliography and Guide* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981).
- ² See, for example, T. G. Regehr, "Historiography of the Canadian Plains After 1870," in Richard Allen, ed., *A Region of the Mind: Interpreting the Western Canadian Plains* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1973), pp. 87-102; David J. Bercuson, "Recent Developments in Prairie Historiography," *Acadiensis: Journal of the Atlantic Region*, Vol. IV (Autumn 1974), pp. 138-47; P. E. Roy, "The Company Province and Its Centennials: A Review of Recent British Columbia Historiography," *ibid.*, pp. 148-59; and H. Keith Ralston, "Select Bibliography on the History of British Columbia," in J. Friesen and H. K. Ralston, eds., *Historical Essays on British Columbia* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), pp. 281-93. For other references on western Canada see Alan F. J. Artibise, *Western Canada Since 1870: A Select Bibliography and Guide* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1978).
- ³ Bruce M. Stave, "A Conversation with H. J. Dyos: Urban History in Great Britain," *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 5 (August 1979), pp. 478-79 and *passim*; and Gilbert A. Stelter, "Urban History in Canada," *The History and Social Science Teacher*, Vol. 14 (Spring 1979), pp. 185-94. The issue of the relationship between local history and urban history is also discussed by H. J. Dyos in "Agenda for Urban Historians" and by S. G. Checkland in "Toward a Definition of Urban History." Both articles are in H. J. Dyos, ed., *The Study of Urban History* (London: Edward Arnold, 1968). See also the "discussions" of these articles in the same volume.
- ⁴ This theme has been discussed in many articles by J. M. S. Careless. See, for example, his "Metropolis and Region: The Interplay Between City and Region in Canadian History Before 1914," *Urban History Review*, No. 3-78 (February 1979), pp. 99-118.

PART ONE

THE ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

Any satisfactory explanation of urban growth must contain an examination of many variables, including such factors as trends in regional, national, and international economic development; changes in agricultural, transportation, and industrial technology; migration patterns; and the role of individuals and groups within a town or city. Recent literature on this subject has recognized the complexity of this issue and has stressed that all the variables must be considered.¹ In discussions on the question of urban growth in general one must, of course, be careful to analyze all factors, but no such necessity exists for case studies. The fact is that in particular cases and in specific periods, the growth rate of individual cities and towns may in large part be the result of only a few predominant factors. In other words, a sense of time and place plays a crucial role in explanation.² It is important to note, however, that case studies which emphasize different factors should not be viewed as denying the validity of other forces in other cities. Rather, they should be seen as aiding in our understanding of a complex problem by providing detailed and empirically-based case studies. They certainly do not preclude the development of a comprehensive model of urban growth.

General accounts of western Canadian urban growth are not numerous³ and students interested in understanding this process must often rely on either theoretical models or broadly based studies.⁴ While much can be learned from these studies, they are nonetheless unsatisfactory for students of western Canadian history. The fact is that research on western urban growth is still in its infancy, and attempts to fit such a complex region into larger studies or existing models remain unconvincing since the arguments are not supportable by solid empirical research. This is not to say that the conclusions reached in these studies are necessarily wrong, but only to point out that more research at the local and regional level is required before general explanations and theories can be accepted with confidence.

The two articles that follow, based as they are on detailed research, considerably advance our understanding of western urban growth. Economist Paul Phillips analyzes the evolution of the prairie urban system through a long period of stability (1911-1951) and the beginnings of a period of change (1951-1961). He argues that the urban

pattern in place on the prairies by 1911 was based on its agrarian hinterland, which produced cereal grain, livestock, and other related products. In this system, Winnipeg's metropolitan dominance was based on monopoly control over the commercial, financial, and transportation services necessary to the marketing of agricultural products and the distribution of goods and services to the hinterland. By the 1950s, however, new staples—largely energy based—began to produce a radically different political economy in which metropolitan hegemony is no longer exerted through commercial control but through the control of production. The result is the gradual decline of Winnipeg's commercial empire and the emergence of a completely different urban system.

Historian Robert McDonald examines the evolution of British Columbia's economic system and the role played in it by the province's two major cities in the pre-World War I era. There is an interesting contrast between the period of stability on the prairies, described by Phillips, and this era of dramatic change in British Columbia during the three decades following the completion of the transcontinental railway. The most notable change, of course, was the sharp decline in Victoria's metropolitan status and its replacement by mainland Vancouver. The changing roles of British Columbia's two leading cities mirrored closely the stages of economic development through which the province passed from 1886 to 1914.

Although Phillips and McDonald approach the study of western urban growth from different viewpoints and deal with different eras, they do provide an interesting framework for further work in this area. In spite of the view of the West as a homogeneous region—a view held more strongly in eastern than western Canada—these two papers indicate that there are striking differences in the resource bases and urban patterns of British Columbia and the Prairies. Indeed, perhaps the only similarity between the two is that while certain cities in both areas increasingly dominated their hinterlands and while some cities like Vancouver stood astride major international trade routes, western cities were nonetheless in positions of economic subservience to distant metropolitan centres. As cities like Montreal and Toronto perfected marketing, financial, and industrial facilities, this dependence increased, even as major western cities were enjoying a lucrative reciprocal trade with the surrounding countryside. Ironically, at least until the post-World War II period, the more extensive the transportation links and the volume of trade, the greater the dependence of western cities on eastern industry and financial concerns.

NOTES

- ¹ For two balanced accounts see the introduction to section one in Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, eds., *The Usable Urban Past: Planning and Politics in the Modern Canadian City* (Toronto, 1979), pp. 11-15; and Chapter 3, "Growth Forces: National Pattern, Regional Diversity and the Urban System," in Len Gertler and Ron Crowley, *Changing Canadian Cities: The Next Twenty-Five Years* (Toronto, 1977).
 - ² For a detailed discussion of the importance of time and place see Gilbert A. Stelter, "A Sense of Time and Place: The Historian's Approach to Canada's Urban Past," in Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 420-41.
 - ³ They include L. D. McCann, "Urban Growth in Western Canada, 1881-1961," *The Albertan Geographer*, No. 5 (1969), pp. 65-74; Paul Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies, 1871-1916," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. VIII, No. 15 (May 1975), pp. 77-101; J. M. S. Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West, 1870-1914," in Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 125-141; K. Lenz, "Large Urban Places in the Prairie Provinces—Their Development and Location," in R. L. Gentilcore, ed., *Canada's Changing Geography* (Toronto, 1967), pp. 199-211; Alan F. J. Artibise, "Patterns of Prairie Urban Development, 1871-1950," in D. Bercuson and P. Buckner, eds., *The Great Chautauqua: Aspects of Western and Maritime History* (forthcoming 1981); W. G. Hardwick, "The Georgia Strait Urban Region," in J. Lewis Robinson, ed., *British Columbia: Studies in Canadian Geography* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 119-34; and L. D. McCann, "Urban Growth in a Staple Economy: The Emergence of Vancouver as a Regional Metropolis, 1886-1914," in L. J. Evenden, ed., *Vancouver: Western Metropolis* (Victoria, 1978), pp. 17-42.
 - ⁴ Some of the better theoretical studies are A. F. Burghardt, "A Hypothesis About Gateway Cities," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. LXI, No. 2 (June 1971); Harry W. Richardson, *Urban Economics: Theory and Policy* (London, 1976); W. R. Thompson, *A Preface to Urban Economics* (Baltimore, 1965); R. W. Pfouts, ed., *The Techniques of Urban Economic Analysis* (West Trenton, N.J., 1960); D. G. North, "Location Theory and Regional Economic Growth," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. LXIII (1955), pp. 243-58; Allan Pred, "Industrialization, Initial Advantage, and American Metropolitan Growth," *Geographical Review*, Vol. LV (1965), pp. 158-85; and Peter G. Goheen, "Industrialization and the Growth of Cities in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Studies*, Vol. 14 (1971), pp. 49-66.
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1. THE PRAIRIE URBAN SYSTEM, 1911-1961: SPECIALIZATION AND CHANGE*

PAUL PHILLIPS

The great Canadian wheat boom was nearing its end by 1911. The massive migration of people to the prairie region and the rapidity with which the staple trade in wheat was established were dramatic developments, coming as they did after a long period of slow growth despite strong encouragement from the Canadian government whose aim was the creation of a western frontier of settlement, a hinterland designed to revive the lagging fortunes of the St. Lawrence commercial system. But the extensive expansionary phase was short-lived. Although a filling in of hitherto unoccupied lands continued after the dislocations of the Great War and the post-war depression, the process slowed down greatly after the pre-war boom era. Official recognition of the completion of the expansion phase came in 1930 when unceded prairie crown land and resources were formally given by the federal government to the provincial governments, thus ending the inferior constitutional status of the prairie provinces.

Difficulties and dislocations continued, however, with a decade of intense depression and drought, a second world war, and postwar reconstruction. But the essential element of the prairie economy from 1911 to the 1950s was its reliance on the production of cereal grains and, to a lesser extent, of other agricultural products, particularly livestock and related products. In short, agriculture was the basic staple industry which determined the fate of the regional economy. Other mineral industries had begun to lessen the extreme dependency on agriculture and to alter the economic base of urbanization in ways quite different from those that characterized the intervening period when technological change and rising incomes had produced a rural to urban population shift without altering significantly the economic base and functions of the urban system.¹

¹I am indebted to Ed Rea, Ruben Bellan, Derek Hum, and Alan Artibise for comments and suggestions for improving this paper. As usual, remaining errors of fact or interpretation are my responsibility.

The Historical Setting

Prior to the coming of the European, the interior of North America was inhabited by a relatively small population of Indians, predominantly migratory hunters. The initial attraction for the Europeans to enter the heart of the continent was the fur trade. Originally, this trade was carried on at the head of the Great Lakes or on the shores of Hudson Bay, but as competition between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company grew, the traders were forced further inland to their source of fur supplies. In 1774 the Hudson's Bay Company established its first inland post at Cumberland House and from that date carried on a policy of establishing trading posts in the Athabasca and Lake Winnipeg areas.

The first European settlement was established in 1812 on the Red River Valley grant of Lord Selkirk who was attempting, among other things, to help poverty-ridden crofters in Scotland. The colony had other effects, however. Its existence on the trading routes of the North West Company helped to decrease the competition from the Montreal firms. It was also seen as a possible source of agricultural supplies for the Hudson's Bay Company. The colony remained in existence despite attempts to destroy it by the North West Company. The merger of the two companies in 1821 removed this hostility that threatened the existence of the settlement.

Between 1821 and 1835 the Selkirk settlement supplied provisions and labour for the fur trade. While the Hudson's Bay Company controlled the area north of the settlement, it could not control the land to the south; as a result many Red River colonists increasingly carried on a considerable trade with American firms. After the sale of the land grant back to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1835, an attempt was made to put an end to this trade, but with little success. By the middle of the nineteenth century the colony had a population of over five thousand but further development was limited by the lack of economic opportunity outside of the provision and carriage trade for the fur industry. The development of staple agriculture had to await low cost transportation, dryland farming techniques, and suitable varieties of early-maturing grain.

The north-south orientation of the Red River settlement trade strengthened with the completion of the railway connecting Winnipeg with St. Paul and Chicago in 1878. This provision of low-cost transportation made possible the development of staple agricultural production. However, the dream of a Canadian nation from sea to sea and the resulting fear of such north-south economic alignments led to the formation of the "national policy," one of the main objectives of which was the economic inclusion of the West in the new Canadian

Dominion. This was not possible until an east-west transportation system was established, wholly within Canada. The incorporation of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1880 closed the era of western isolation and opened up new opportunities for settlement and development in the prairie region.

By 1883 the CPR was completed between Winnipeg and eastern Canada, and by 1885 it was extended to both coasts. The closing of the American frontier around the beginning of the last decade of the century, rising export markets and grain prices, and falling transportation costs brought prosperity and mass immigration to the prairies. The year 1896 also saw the renewal of railway construction in Manitoba on what eventually became the second transcontinental system, the Canadian Northern, which followed the northern route originally surveyed for the CPR along the southern fringe of the park belt. By 1901, the population of the region reached 419,512, largely concentrated in homesteads along the CPR tracks—the main line through the southern part of the region, as well as the three north-south lines connecting the Edmonton, Saskatoon and the Manitoba interlake regions with the transcontinental.

The first decade of this century saw the rapid expansion of the railroads and with them settlement, either along existing lines or in areas where lines were expected. The Dominion Lands Policy which provided free, one-quarter section homesteads and an option on a second quarter section helped in the rapid settlement of the region, but only after the closing of the American frontier and after transportation facilities were available or anticipated for the handling of the staple wheat production. In the decade from 1901 to 1911, population rose from 419,512 to 1,322,709. The number of farms increased from 55,176 to 199,213 and occupied land rose by forty-two million acres, an increase of 272 per cent. The average size of farms remained more or less constant for all three provinces—just under 300 acres.

The bulk of early settlement occurred in the prairie grasslands, partly because of the southern route of the CPR, and partly because of the inflow of settlers from the United States who were schooled in the techniques of dryland farming and found the conditions in the south most familiar. By 1906, settlement had spread north in anticipation of the expansion of the railways. With the construction of the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific and the extension of a system of feeder lines, almost the entire prairie and park belts were settled by 1911.

While it was agriculture that provided the attraction for settlement and for the building of railways, the demands for provisions and services made by both the settlers and those involved in the construction of the railways made profitable the entry into wholesale and retail

trade and into some secondary manufacturing. The railways and their construction brought demands for structural materials, coal for the steam engines, and food for the workers. The transportation systems not only made possible settlement and the production of staple wheat and cattle, but their construction crews provided a cash market for some of the farmers' produce and for processed goods (such as butter and cheese) which helped the farmer get established by providing an alternative source of income when necessary.²

The first ten years of the twentieth century were a period of rapid development for the prairie region. Towns and villages sprang up in answer to the demand for goods and services, but the larger ones became important because of their functions as transportation junctions or institutional centres.

Urban centres were created in direct relation to the railroads and the convenience of elevators for grain shipment. . . . These centres became distributing points for supplies, e.g. agricultural implements, lumber, coal and general merchandise. Larger centres flourished at divisional points located approximately one hundred and ten to one hundred and thirty miles apart. . . . at which engines and train crews were changed. The largest centres were dependent on the location of branch lines and junction points, of terminal points, and the stimulus to population afforded by government buildings, education facilities, and wholesale houses. . . .³

The growth of incorporated centres was extremely rapid between 1901 and 1911. The number of centres increased from 65 to 397, an increase of 510.8 per cent. Population residing in these centres rose from 103,000 to 469,000, an increase of 354.7 per cent. Most of these centres were small. In 1901, 82.6 per cent were less than 2,000 in population. The eight centres with over 2,000 people, however, contained 65.0 per cent of the total urban population (see Table I). The population classified as urban in 1901 was 24.6 per cent of the total prairie population; the corresponding figure for urban areas with 2,000 or more people was 16.0 per cent. The adjoining cities of Winnipeg and St. Boniface accounted for a little over 40 per cent of the total urban population or two-thirds of the combined population of the larger centres over 2,000 population.

Between 1901 and 1911, urbanization proceeded at a rapid rate (see Tables I and II). By 1911, the population classified as urban had jumped to over 35 per cent, and there had been remarkable growth in the region's larger centres.⁴ Yet the region remained a staple grain-producing area with urban centres serving chiefly as service points for the agricultural sector. Only Winnipeg had achieved a relatively diverse economy.

TABLE I

POPULATIONS OF MAJOR PRAIRIE CITIES, 1871-1916^(a)

City	1871	1881	1891	1901	1906	1911	1916
Winnipeg	241	7,985	25,639	43,340	90,153	136,035	163,000
Calgary	—	—	3,867	4,392	13,573	43,704	56,514
Edmonton	—	—	300 ^(b)	4,176	14,088	31,064	53,846
Regina	—	800 ^(c)	1,681 ^(d)	2,249	6,169	30,213	26,127
Saskatoon	—	—	—	113	3,011	12,004	21,048
Moose Jaw	—	—	—	1,558	6,249	13,823	16,934
Brandon	—	—	—	5,620	10,408	13,839	15,215
St. Boniface	817	1,283	1,553	2,019	5,119	7,483	11,021
Lethbridge	—	—	—	2,072	2,936	9,035	9,436
Medicine Hat	—	—	—	1,570	3,020	5,608	9,272
Prince Albert	—	—	—	1,785	3,005	6,254	6,436
Portage la Prairie	—	—	3,362	3,901	5,106	5,892	5,879

Notes: a) Population is listed according to areas as of 1916.

b) This is an approximation taken from City of Edmonton records.

c) The population of Regina in 1882-1883 was between "800 and 900 souls."
See E. G. Drake, *Regina: The Queen City* (Toronto, 1955), p. 22.d) *Ibid.*, p. 71.SOURCE: *Census of Prairie Provinces, 1916.*

TABLE II

URBAN POPULATION AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION
BY PROVINCE, 1911

Manitoba		Alberta	
Urban	43.6	Urban	36.8
Winnipeg	29.5	Calgary	11.7
		Edmonton	6.7
Saskatchewan		Prairies	
Urban	26.7	Urban	35.3
Regina	6.1	5 major cities	18.6
Saskatoon	2.4		

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1911.***Winnipeg as Regional Metropolis**

The hegemony of Winnipeg, the satellite metropolis of the hinterland, over the urban structure of the region owes much to the transportation system and rail freight rates, as Kerr and Bellan have shown.⁵ Certainly its commanding position in the urban system is demonstrated in population distribution (see Table I). Winnipeg had several

prime advantages. It was the gateway to and from the West—based, in this era of rail and steam, on the fact that all of the railways serving the burgeoning agricultural frontier converged on Winnipeg. Partly because of this and partly because it was the first significant western urban centre, Winnipeg was the commercial and financial centre for the staple region. It became the industrial centre for the West, at least to the extent that it was able to compete with the manufactures from the established businesses of central Canada. Winnipeg's strategic position on the rail lines also made the city the labour market centre for the construction stage of the western railways.

Winnipeg's advantages were in large measure historical or geographic in origin. The Canadian Shield to the east created a buffer, a sort of natural tariff against direct metropolitan control from the St. Lawrence, most pronounced before the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914. On the other hand, policy measures, in no small part influenced by Winnipeg's commercial elite,⁶ enhanced considerably the strategic position of Winnipeg. The National Policy tariffs increased the effective protection afforded Winnipeg by the Canadian Shield by greatly reducing the potential of competition in industrial and construction goods from American sources south of the prairie region. Transport rate structures blatantly favoured Winnipeg wholesalers over those in other prairie centres. In 1890 Winnipeg received preferential rail rate reductions, and in the 1898 "traders' tariff" the advantages were extended. Despite reductions in these preferences ordered by the Board of Railway Commissioners, it was not until 1921 that the last vestiges of Winnipeg's advantages were removed.⁷ On the other hand, the reduction in rates on western bound settlers' goods contained in the 1898 Crow's Nest Pass Agreement served to reduce the natural protection on many kinds of manufactured goods which would otherwise have encouraged more industrial expansion in Winnipeg and throughout the West generally.

Another policy decision also had considerable impact on developing the metropolitan status of Winnipeg in the prairie urban system. By 1890 the federal government had switched control of grain inspection and grading from Toronto to Winnipeg. With the creation of the Grain Exchange in 1887 and the convergence of three railways and attendant shops on the city, its dominance over the grain trade and the financial and commercial supporting industries was complete.⁸

Winnipeg's central role can be readily demonstrated by reviewing employment and output distribution in the years just prior to the Great War and comparing Winnipeg's structure with that of the other major urban centres. One problem with this approach is that Winnipeg from very early on was surrounded by incorporated centres which were, in fact, part of the Winnipeg metropolitan area but for which comparable

statistics are not available (e.g., St. Boniface, St. James and Fort Garry). Industrial activity was not particularly important in most of the surrounding areas, except in St. Boniface, but there was a certain occupational selectivity of residence which shows up in later censuses when metropolitan area statistics are available. These facts, however, generally serve to understate Winnipeg's dominance. Alternatively, provincial measures of the distribution of certain economic functions and the concentration of these functions in the major urban centres serves as an indicator of the dominance of the city proper.

TABLE III
DISTRIBUTION OF MANUFACTURING ACTIVITY IN THE
PRAIRIE REGION, 1910

	Percentage of Total Prairie								
	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	Winnipeg	Regina	Saskatoon	Calgary	Edmonton	5 Centres
Employment	62.3	10.2	27.5	57.3	2.8	1.0	10.4	6.6	79.3
Value Added	65.7	8.3	26.0	51.0	3.0	1.5	11.0	6.8	73.3
Gross Value of Output	68.7	6.7	24.6	48.2	1.9	1.2	11.4	6.6	69.3

SOURCE: P. A. Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region, 1911 to 1961," M.A. Thesis (University of Saskatchewan, 1963), Appendixes Q and R.

Manitoba's and Winnipeg's predominance in the manufacturing sector was broadly based, in both the processing of agricultural goods for export (flour milling and meatpacking) and in manufacturing for the regional market. In fact, Manitoba had a slightly higher share of manufacturing for regional consumption than it did of total manufacturing. Alberta, presumably with a concentration in Calgary, had strength in the processing of animal products, particularly meatpacking but also in butter and cheese production. This reflects the fact that the Alberta agricultural economy has traditionally been less dependent on grain and more oriented to animal products. Another indicator of Winnipeg's metropolitan status was its domination of wholesale trade. Manitoba probably accounted for well over half of total wholesaling employment on the prairies and the overwhelming proportion of this was concentrated in Winnipeg.⁹

Perhaps the best measure of urban specialization in the region is given by an overview of employment distribution near the end of the

TABLE IV

RATIOS: VALUE OF LAND CROPS TO VALUE OF ANIMALS AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS

	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Prairies
1910	2.2	3.2	0.6	1.9
1915	3.5	5.5	2.4	4.0

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendix P.

wheat economy establishment phase in the four major centres. (Saskatoon was not yet of sufficient size to be included in the 1911 occupational census.) Winnipeg's superiority in manufacturing, commerce and transportation attests to its role as gateway to the West. At the other extreme is Regina, with a higher proportion of service workers but, more markedly, with a very high percentage employed in construction, a manifestation of the investment phase of the wheat economy and the service needs that this expansion engendered. Alberta cities exhibit a pattern somewhere between those of Winnipeg and Regina. Bellan's intensive study of Winnipeg gives support to this interpretation: "Though Winnipeg grew substantially after 1912, that year marked the apogee of its power and influence in the West."¹⁰

TABLE V

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE LABOUR FORCE IN FOUR MAJOR URBAN CENTRES, 1911 (percentages)

Occupation	Winnipeg	Regina	Calgary	Edmonton	4 Centres
Agriculture	1.0	2.0	3.6	4.3	2.0
Other Primary	0.4	0.1	1.0	1.8	0.6
Manufacturing & mechanical	17.6	8.6	15.1	14.1	15.4
Construction	17.2	28.8	20.8	17.5	19.6
Transportation	13.7	11.0	12.6	8.8	12.6
Commerce	25.0	21.0	20.8	22.1	23.3
Service	17.7	21.8	19.2	22.3	19.1
Professional	7.5	6.6	6.8	9.0	7.4
Total	100.1	99.9	99.9	99.9	100.0

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendixes G and H.

Wholesale trade in 1911 was estimated at \$120 million (employing 3,000 workers). Industrial output reached \$50 million in 1912 (employing 18,000, concentrated in the building-material industries).¹¹ Perhaps most indicative was the size and structure of the financial sector, which included in 1912 no less than two bank head offices and fourteen regional head offices; and for 1913, Bellan details well over 1,000 financial institutions, brokers and agents operating in the Winnipeg market.¹² The year 1912 also saw the opening of the St. Boniface stockyards, the biggest in the British Empire, if not the world.

An Era of Gradual Change, 1914-1950

The depression that immediately preceded the 1914-18 War coincided with the slowing down of the great western agricultural expansion. The wheat economy, its commercial and transportation infrastructure, and its main institutions were established and in place. The taking up of unoccupied land and investment in powered farm machinery were carried on in the 1920s, but the scale and the rate of expansion were greatly reduced. One significant indication was the dramatic decline (more than 25 per cent) in employment in the prairie construction industry between 1911 and 1921. The percentage of the region's male labour force employed in construction occupations declined from six per cent in 1911 to three and a half per cent in 1921. Building permits in Winnipeg averaged \$16.8 million in the years 1910 to 1914 before dropping by two thirds in the 1920-24 period and by half in the more prosperous second half of the twenties.¹³ Between 1901 and 1911 the number of farms had almost quadrupled, from 55.2 thousand to 199.2 thousand; the area of improved land had more than quadrupled. In the succeeding twenty years the number of farms rose less than 50 per cent, although improved land more than doubled (see Table VI). As V. C. Fowke notes: "The investment boom which had

TABLE VI

EXPANSION OF POPULATION, FARMS AND IMPROVED ACREAGE,
1901-1931

	Population	Rural (percentages)	Number of Farms (thousands)	Acres Improved Land (million acres)
1901	419,512	75	55.2	5.6
1911	1,328,121	65	199.2	23.0
1921	1,956,082	64	255.6	44.9
1931	2,353,529	62	288.1	59.8

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1901-1931.*

characterized the early years of the twentieth century had exhausted itself by 1913, and serious economic difficulties faced Canada and the prairie provinces as a result."¹⁴ While the war created an artificial stimulus that temporarily averted the effects of contraction in the growth rate, these effects were felt in the 1920s:

The absolute quantities of immigration, occupation and improvement of land, and capital formation which were associated with the wheat economy in the latter half of the 1920s were smaller than before the war. In relative terms, however, the diminution was greater still, for other frontiers had meanwhile risen to prominence within the Dominion...¹⁵

The relative decline of capital investment and railways construction are indicated in Table VII.

TABLE VII

PRAIRIE FARM AND TRANSPORT INVESTMENT
(millions of dollars)

	Av. Prairie Farm Investment per year	Av. Railway Construction Investment per year
1901-1905	44.2	24.8
1906-1910	63.8	76.2
1911-1915	92.6	107.4
1916-1920	74.0	50.6
1921-1925	49.0	50.6
1926-1930	90.8	77.8

SOURCE: K. A. H. Buckley, "Capital Formation in Canada, 1896-1930," in W. T. Easterbrook and M. H. Watkins, eds., *Approaches to Canadian Economic History* (Toronto, 1967), pp. 176-79.

Much of the investment in prairie farms in the twenties was in farm equipment, as indicated by Table VIII. Most of this equipment, and automobiles, were supplied from outside the prairie region. According to Mackintosh, 100 per cent of automobiles, 98 per cent of hardware and tools, and 97 per cent of agricultural implements produced in Canada in 1926 came from Ontario and Quebec.¹⁶ Railway investment in the Prairies that had totalled 7,500 miles between 1901 and 1914 fell to 1,700 miles in the renewed expansion in the last half of the twenties, 1926-31.¹⁷ The 1930s, of course, brought the twin disasters of depression and drought but despite some increase in the relative importance of new staples to the region, particularly in the mining industry, the basic reliance on the agricultural economy did not change significantly. This is indicated primarily by labour force distribution because the calamitous declines in both prices and yields in agri-

TABLE VIII

FARM MACHINERY IN THE PRAIRIE REGION, 1921-31

	1921	1931
Tractors	38,485	50,136
Combines	N.A.	8,897
Motor Trucks	(5,640) ^(a)	21,517
Binders and Threshers	N.A.	298,157
Automobiles	73,359 ^(b)	133,499

Notes: a) Figure for trucks in 1926. Included in Automobiles in 1921.

b) Includes trucks. Automobiles are not included in figures on farm investment.
N.A.—not available.

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1921-1931.*

culture had the effect of markedly depressing agriculture's share of the net value of commodity production (see Table IX). In contrast is the distribution by occupation of the male labour force (see Table X).

For the two interwar decades the structure of the prairie economy, indicated by labour force distribution, remained remarkably stable. The following decade of war and postwar reconstruction, however, began to show significant changes by labour force measures. But this trend should not be overestimated. Agricultural output in the five years from 1936 to 1940 inclusive constituted 56.2 per cent of the net value of commodity production; from 1941 to 1945, 60.3 per cent; and from 1946 to 1950, 56.5 per cent. It is only after 1952 that agriculture falls and remains below fifty per cent of commodity value. The same

TABLE IX

NET VALUE OF COMMODITY PRODUCTION: SELECTED INDUSTRIES—PRAIRIE REGION
(\$000s)

	(1) Agriculture	(2) Mining	(3) Manufacturing	(4) Construction	(2) as % of (1)	(3) as % of (1)	(4) as % of (1)
Av. 1926-1930	451,747	31,000	106,883	N.A.	6.9	23.7	N.A.
Av. 1931-1935	166,528	27,094	77,193	N.A.	16.3	46.4	N.A.
Av. 1936-1940	289,374	39,106	100,804	60,600	13.5	34.8	20.9
Av. 1941-1945	621,120	60,956	202,176	100,400	9.8	32.6	16.2
Av. 1946-1950	932,028	126,400	300,908	229,260	13.6	32.3	24.6

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendix A.

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRAIRIE LABOUR FORCE:
SELECTED OCCUPATIONS*—MALES
(percentages)

	Agric.	Mining & Quarry	Manu. & Mech.	Constr.	Trans. & Commun.
1921	59.5	1.5	5.1	3.6	5.7
1931	55.8	1.5	5.9	3.7	6.5
1936	59.2	1.5	6.1	3.0	6.5
1941	56.2	1.5	7.5	3.6	6.9
1946	47.9	1.3	8.8	4.5	7.9
1951	41.8	1.5	9.6	5.9	10.3

*Industrial distribution not available before 1931. From 1931 on, however, the magnitude and direction of trends does not differ markedly from the most comparable occupational figures.
SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendix C.

stability of shares is shown by manufacturing, mining and construction until the early 1950s. Within manufacturing, the proportion accounted for by production of traditional export-oriented agricultural products also shows no consistent downward trend until the late 1940s and early 1950s (see Table XI). The explanation for the diversity in production and labour force trends lies in the mechanization of primary agriculture indicated by the rapid introduction of farm machinery, a process which decelerated in the following decade (see Table XII).

The significance of the economic background of the prairie region in the 1921-1951 period is the extent to which agriculture held sway despite (or perhaps because of) two depressions, war, and two periods of recovery or reconstruction. While wheat was king, however, its dominance was in decline in the latter part of the period, particularly in Alberta (see Table XIII).

TABLE XI

NET VALUE OF EXPORT-BASED MANUFACTURING
AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MANUFACTURING

1925	15.0	1941	16.3
1931	17.2	1946	20.7
1936	22.9	1951	15.9

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendix Q.

TABLE XII

FARM MACHINERY IN THE PRAIRIE REGION: 1941-61

	1941	1951	1961
Tractors	112,624	236,930	290,700
Combines	18,081	79,117	127,276
Trucks	43,363	113,512	182,733

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1941-1961*.

It was against this background of structural stability, specialization and change that the western urban system evolved. It was a period characterized by the slow erosion of Winnipeg's hinterland, a consequence of a number of factors: the opening of the West to Vancouver's penetration, the diffusion of Winnipeg's commercial functions in the wheat economy, a decline in the relative importance of grain, and the slow but steady progress of Calgary and Edmonton to metropolitan status.

TABLE XIII

RATIOS: VALUE OF LAND CROPS TO VALUE OF ANIMALS
AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS

	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Prairies
1920	3.7	5.3	3.6	4.3
1930	2.0	2.9	2.0	2.3
1935	1.6	3.2	2.1	2.4
1940	1.8	3.7	2.1	2.6
1945	2.0	3.1	1.3	2.0
1950	1.7	2.8	0.9	1.6

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1921-1951*.

In part, the decline of Winnipeg's dominance in the urban system was the result of explicit policy changes. The most important, the erosion of its freight rate advantage, actually began prior to the Great War, but the impact was delayed because of the special demands of wartime production. As Bellan notes:

By 1914 Winnipeg had lost the major portion of the freight rate privileges which had contributed so notably to the concentration of western wholesaling facilities within the City during the pre-war era of expansion. [In 1914, the Board of Railway Commissioners] ordered the railways to lower the freight rates in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia to the Manitoba standard, and to extend distribution tariffs to a number of smaller Western cities.¹⁸

But the city still had certain advantages, a fictitiously low mileage from the Lakehead for rate-making purposes and a favourable "mixing" policy on carload lots. In the 1920s even these advantages disappeared as new rulings made it economical to transship in bulk through Winnipeg and to import through Vancouver. What exacerbated the problem was the growth of mail order houses (where transport costs were not proportional to distance) and the completion of the Panama Canal in 1914 which made shipment through Vancouver, even from the east coast, competitive with shipment through Winnipeg—particularly after the war, when both ocean freight rates and B.C. rail rates declined. The depressing effect on Winnipeg's wholesale district was dramatic.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the city did manage to hold an edge as was revealed in the 1931 *Census*, the first to report fully on wholesale trade. At that time Winnipeg was the third largest wholesale trade centre in Canada, accounting for 19.1 per cent of all Canadian wholesale sales—behind only Montreal (23.1 per cent) and Toronto (20.1 per cent) and well ahead of the fourth largest, Vancouver (6.4 per cent). But Winnipeg's position was gradually eroded over the next 20 years, to the advantage of Alberta's major cities.

TABLE XIV

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WHOLESALE EMPLOYMENT

	Manitoba	Winnipeg	Edmonton and Calgary	Regina and Saskatoon
1931	47.9	35.6	21.1	12.8
1936	47.1	35.0	25.2	13.9
1941	45.9	31.3	23.1	13.4
1946	42.9	30.1	26.7	15.1
1951	39.3	24.5	29.4	14.9

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendix M.

There were other transportation-related developments that did not augur well for continued Winnipeg hegemony over the region. These included the nationalization and merger of the Canadian Northern Railway with the Grand Trunk (and the resulting loss of the Canadian Northern's head office) and the CPR's construction of rail yards and workshops in Calgary in 1912.²⁰ The combination of the winding down of railway construction and the mechanization of harvesting also eroded Winnipeg's role as the labour market of western Canada.

But perhaps the two most fundamental influences on the long-term prospects for Winnipeg as a metropolitan centre were changes in the organization and structure of agriculture itself. At its apex of influence and prosperity prior to the Great War, Winnipeg had commercial and financial control of the wheat economy. Institutional changes in the interwar period geographically diffused that control. Secondly, the rise in relative importance of non-grain products also served to reduce Winnipeg's hegemony over agricultural organization and processing. Slaughtering and meatpacking and butter and cheese manufacture was not controlled from Winnipeg as was the grain industry.²¹ Yet between 1922 and 1951, gross output in meatpacking rose 1,012 per cent, in butter and cheese products 385 per cent. Comparable employment increases were 308 per cent and 148 per cent respectively. In flour milling, by contrast, gross value rose only 181 per cent and employment only 6 per cent.²²

But such changes were probably of less consequence than the institutional changes in the grain trade which greatly altered Winnipeg's control. The first, and probably most important, was the formation of the provincial wheat pools in the 1920s. The effect was to disperse control and income from Winnipeg head offices of the private grain trade both interprovincially and to some extent from urban to rural recipients. The second blow to Winnipeg's control of the trade was the abolition of the grain exchange as the controlling commercial and financial institution of the grain trade and its replacement by a national institution, the Canadian Wheat Board, in the 1930s. Both these institutional changes supplemented the emergence of Vancouver as an alternative major port of grain export. By the mid twenties Vancouver was handling more than thirty million bushels of export wheat, around ten per cent of Canadian production.²³

Nevertheless, these changes did not presage any massive change in the basic economic structure of the prairie urban system, whatever they may have meant by way of diminution of Winnipeg's financial and commercial hinterland. This is illustrated by the gradual nature of the shift westward in employment in the financial, commercial and transportation industries, specifically to Calgary and Edmonton, reflecting the more general westward movement of urban population. Change within the agricultural economy did not induce any major shift in urban specialization despite the increasing importance of Calgary and Edmonton in the prairie urban system.

In addition to this westward shift in urban population to Alberta, there was a major shift in population from rural to urban areas. This change, which was concentrated in the second half of the 1940s, resulted from technological advances—the mechanization of agriculture, diffusion of the automobile, and the increase in farm size. The

TABLE XV

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE LABOUR FORCE IN THE FIVE
MAJOR CITIES BY SELECTED INDUSTRY GROUPS*: 1921-1951

	1921*	1931	1941	1951	1921*	1931	1941	1951
	Winnipeg				Edmonton and Calgary			
Population	51.0	45.7	43.9	35.1	31.9	34.1	36.1	46.4
Total Labour Force	50.2	47.2	45.9	38.1	32.2	33.2	34.6	43.9
Tertiary Labour Force	n.a.	46.8	44.3	36.7	n.a.	32.9	34.4	42.4
Trans. & Comm.	55.0	48.3	48.4	42.5	31.5	34.2	33.6	39.3
Trade	54.1	49.4	45.7	37.9	29.7	31.0	33.5	41.5
Fin. and Ins.	54.3	48.0	49.5	40.9	25.8	30.3	30.3	41.4
	Saskatoon and Regina				Total Five Cities			
Population	17.1	20.2	20.0	18.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Labour Force	17.0	19.6	19.6	18.6	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.0
Tertiary Labour Force	n.a.	20.4	21.3	20.9	n.a.	100.1	100.0	100.0
Trans. & Comm.	13.5	17.5	18.0	18.2	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Trade	16.2	19.7	20.8	20.6	100.0	100.1	100.0	100.0
Fin. and Ins.	19.8	21.6	20.2	17.7	99.9	99.9	100.0	100.0

*1921 by Occupation group, 1931-51 by Industry group.

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region,"
Appendixes G, H, I, J, and Z.

process was begun in Manitoba before the depression but in the two more western provinces was not pronounced until the war and post-war period. More significant is the fact that Alberta, from being consistently the second most rural province up to 1946, had become the most urban by 1951. In general, the differences between the three provinces in rural-urban distribution decline over the period, but, again, most dramatically in the 1940s.

In general, therefore, between the peak of extensive expansion in the wheat economy just before the Great War and the early 1950s there was a substantial degree of stability in the prairie urban system modified by technological and product changes in agriculture itself, by changes in marketing institutions, by changes in transportation systems, policy and technology, and by the shift in the centre of population westward. But these were changes of "degree" rather than of "kind." Winnipeg's hinterland gradually shrank, Edmonton's and Calgary's slowly expanded partly because Vancouver provided a western alternative to Winnipeg as gateway to the prairie region. Nevertheless, the urban structure remained deeply rooted in the agricultural staple economy.

TABLE XVI

RURAL-URBAN POPULATION DISTRIBUTION: PRAIRIE REGION
(percentages)

	1921	1931	1941	1951
Urban	36.0	37.6	38.1	48.8
Rural Non-Farm	11.2	11.6	14.5	13.8
Rural Farm	52.8	50.8	47.4	37.4
Total Rural	64.0	62.4	61.9	51.2

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendix X.

The Urban System After 1950

It is obvious that urbanization had taken a giant leap during the war and in the immediate postwar period as a result of changes within the agricultural economy. This process continued but was greatly reinforced by new economic forces outside the agricultural sector as indicated by the distribution of the value of commodity output in the region. This shows a marked shift away from agricultural products, which averaged more than fifty per cent of the net value of commodity production in the 1940s and fell to around half that figure by the end of the fifties. The rapid drop in the relative importance of agriculture is evident in all three provinces as selected statistics in Table XVII

TABLE XVII

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NET VALUE OF COMMODITY PRODUCTION: PRAIRIE REGION, 1950-1961

	Agric.	Forestry, Fishing and Trapping	Mining	Elec. Power	Manu.	Constr.
Av. 1941-50	58.0	2.2	6.8	2.2	19.1	11.9
1950	54.0	1.6	8.9	2.1	18.4	15.2
1951	57.9	1.5	8.6	1.9	16.0	14.0
1952	57.0	1.3	7.8	1.9	17.4	14.7
1953	47.0	1.0	10.1	2.2	19.0	20.6
1954	30.0	1.4	13.8	3.0	24.7	27.0
1955	36.7	1.4	13.6	2.6	26.9	22.8
1956	37.4	1.2	14.9	2.5	20.5	23.5
1957	25.8	1.4	18.6	3.1	24.1	27.0
1958	29.3	1.1	16.1	3.1	24.2	26.1
1959	28.1	1.1	16.5	3.4	24.6	26.3
1960	24.4	1.3	16.1	3.4	22.3	25.1
1961	22.0	1.2	20.7	4.0	24.4	28.2

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendix B.

indicate. Within the agricultural industry the shift away from land crops to animal products continued, so that by 1960 the ratio of values fell to 1.3:1. Both output and employment in slaughtering and meat packing in 1961 stood well above the levels of a decade earlier.

The characteristics exhibited by commodity production trends (see Table XVII) are those of a classic staple boom in the mineral and energy sectors, with associated linked effects in the construction and manufacturing industries. That is, a new investment frontier was opening up in the exploitation of new staple industries. The characteristics of these new industries, however, were very different from the wheat staple. Whereas agriculture required large numbers of people

TABLE XVIII

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NET VALUE OF COMMODITY PRODUCTION: SELECTED INDUSTRIES BY PROVINCE, 1951-61

	Agriculture			Mining			Construction			Manufacturing		
	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.
1951	40.3	78.5	49.8	3.7	4.4	14.9	15.3	8.2	18.5	34.2	6.9	13.9
1956	28.0	59.8	26.4	4.0	7.3	25.0	23.1	19.1	26.6	38.9	10.9	18.8
1961	16.5*	28.8*	21.2	4.8	22.4	26.5	27.3	27.9	28.2	44.7	15.9	20.0

*Because of high crop yield variability, these 1961 figures are undoubtedly unnaturally low, in 1960 unnaturally high. The average for 1959-61 for Manitoba is 21.4%, for Saskatchewan 40.6%.

SOURCE: Phillips, "Structural Change and Population Distribution in the Prairie Region," Appendix B.

geographically dispersed over a large area with the consequent demand for a large and complex transportation, distribution and service infrastructure, the new staples were capital intensive, geographically restricted to certain mineral- and fuel-bearing areas and requiring a much smaller and more localized infrastructure. Secondly, whereas in agriculture both the basic production unit and the service, commercial, transportation, grain handling and financial infrastructure was Canadian owned (much of it indeed regionally owned so that entrepreneurial income accrued to the region), this was not the case for oil and minerals. These industries, because of multinational control, did not constitute a hinterland to prairie cities as agriculture did for Winnipeg. Rather it was a hinterland to the American industrial centres. Professors Caves and Holton made this same point almost two decades ago:

Not only is there but a small number of workers engaged in oil and gas prospecting and production, but the employment multiplier is low, as compared with regions closer to markets. . . .

The economic glamour of oil and gas discoveries stems primarily from the amount of money involved rather than the number of people. Gross value of product per worker in crude petroleum production is about twenty times as great as in [Alberta's] agriculture. The rentier income and entrepreneurial profits in crude petroleum are of the same magnitude as in agriculture and they are growing rapidly. Yet the province may not feel much impact from the new source of income within its boundaries, because of the probably high proportion of entrepreneurial profits accruing to nonresidents.

It is fairly clear, then, that the local repercussions of the petroleum and gas development are likely to be distinctly limited. There may be a great deal of capital involved, but a substantially smaller percentage of it probably stays in the province than in the case of the agricultural sector.²⁴

Since that was written, of course, the advent of OPEC and the new entrepreneurial role of governments in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and, if PetroCan's initiative is maintained, of the federal government, has had a profound influence on the distribution of entrepreneurial and rental incomes which must significantly qualify this conclusion. Nevertheless, the development of the mineral industries had their largest initial effects on construction—the tangible frontier of investment. To the extent that Calgary and Edmonton were satellite metropolises to the energy multinationals one would expect their function to expand proportionately. (This might be equally true for Saskatoon and Regina in relation to both the energy and potash multinationals.) What is also true, however, is that in this new north-south axis, Winnipeg had no function other than its original one in the wheat economy. The metropolitan status of the premier prairie city, genteelly eroding through the staple reign of agriculture, has been rapidly eclipsed since the 1950s. One indication of this change has been the shift in the relative distribution of population in the major prairie centres.

TABLE XIX

RELATIVE POPULATION SIZE OF URBAN CENTRES

	Winnipeg MA	Calgary MA	Edmonton MA	Regina City	Saskatoon City
	(Winnipeg Population = 100.0)				
1951	100.0	39.9	49.4	20.0	14.9
1961	100.0	58.5	70.9	23.6	20.1
1971	100.0	74.6	91.6	25.9	23.3

SOURCE: Adapted from Kuz, *Winnipeg*, p. 12.

It is not only the population shift that characterized changes in the urban system, however. Manitoba, which accounted for almost 40 per cent of prairie wholesale employment in 1951, represented less than a third in 1961. Alberta in that year accounted for the largest share of wholesale employment. Moreover, the pattern of wholesale employment tended to approach the distribution of retail employment. What is indicated is that only Saskatchewan really remained as a commercial hinterland, a hinterland divided between Winnipeg and the two Alberta centres. Further, more recent evidence by R. B. Short suggests the continuing contraction of Winnipeg's wholesale market—to the extent that by 1973 almost three-quarters of Winnipeg's wholesale trade area was in Manitoba and northwest Ontario.²⁵ Similarly, employment in finance, transportation and communications and other service functions showed similar patterns. For example, the distribu-

TABLE XX

DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE:
1951-1961

	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta
Wholesale			
1951	39.3	23.4	37.4
1961	32.6	23.0	44.5
Retail			
1951	36.1	27.9	36.0
1961	30.7	25.9	43.4

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1951-1961.*

TABLE XXI

PERCENTAGE LABOUR FORCE DISTRIBUTION IN FINANCE AND
INSURANCE: FIVE MAJOR CITIES, BY PROVINCE

	Winnipeg	Saskatoon and Regina	Calgary and Edmonton
1951			
Population	35.1	18.5	46.4
Fin. and Ins.	40.9	17.7	41.4
1961			
Population	26.4	20.7	52.9
Fin. and Ins.	29.9	19.8	50.3

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1951-1961.*

tion of financial employment among the five centres suggests continued and fairly rapid erosion in Winnipeg's commercial and financial metropolitan dominance.

All indicators thus suggest what is, in effect, a disintegration of the prairie urban system which emerged to meet the needs of the wheat economy and in which Winnipeg maintained hegemony. New staple industries with vastly different structures, linkages, distributions, labour-capital-output ratios, income distributions, infrastructures, financial and commercial needs, have superimposed a new urban structure in the 1950s on top of the system that emerged half a century earlier.

There are some anomalies between the two structures, that imposed by the grain economy and that of the new mineral economy. The dual metropolitan centres in Alberta and Saskatchewan reflect the transportation, service and commercial needs of the spatially dispersed agricultural economy rather than those of the nodally dispersed mineral economy. This suggests that the urban system which would have evolved in the prairie provinces without the previous pattern of agrarian settlement would be characterized by single metropolitan centres in both Alberta and Saskatchewan, each with its hinterland of satellite centres—a situation comparable to that found in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver.

TABLE XXII

1961 INDEXES OF MANUFACTURING GROWTH BY SELECTED SECTORS
(1951 = 100)

	Agric. Processing*	Petroleum Products	All Others	Total Manufacturing
Manitoba				
Employ.	78.4	137.2	102.0	99.4
Value Added	94.1	431.1	170.7	163.5
Saskatchewan				
Employ.	90.3	122.8	118.8	110.2
Value Added	133.3	194.7	237.9	198.0
Alberta				
Employ.	95.5	154.9	137.9	130.3
Value Added	160.8	246.8	266.4	244.4
Prairies				
Employ.	88.1	140.5	116.0	111.9
Value Added	128.5	250.2	211.2	197.8

*Includes flour milling, slaughtering and meat packing, butter and cheese production and feeds.

SOURCE: *Manufacturing Industries of Canada*.

The major question for Winnipeg in its recent "post-staple" period is whether it has reached a size and structure sufficient to make its growth self-sustaining, largely independent of its staple hinterland, as some have suggested.²⁶ Perhaps some support for this position can be read into manufacturing growth statistics in the period after 1951 although, as Table XXII shows, Manitoba's manufacturing growth rate between 1951 and 1961 and its productivity growth have lagged behind the rest of the region in all categories except petroleum processing where the increase was from a very small base (a fifth or less of prairie employment and output). Manitoba's share of total regional manufacturing employment over the decade fell from 50.8 per cent to 45.1 per cent, while Alberta's increased from 35.7 per cent to 41.5 per cent. Saskatchewan's share remained virtually unchanged, a little over 13 per cent. The same declining pattern is evident in value added and gross value (see Table XXII). Thus although Manitoba has had a disproportionate share of regional manufacturing its lead has narrowed significantly. One should be wary, therefore, of any conclusion that Winnipeg's growth is liberated from dependence on its hinterland.

Prairie Staples and the Urban System: Specialization and Change

The evolution of the prairie urban pattern in the twentieth century reflects a number of determinants connected with the production function of the staple—its technological characteristics, factor requirements, and income distribution and obvious historical and geographical determinants. But it also reflects the distribution of economic power embodied in policies and institutions. In all these determinants the establishment and production phases of the agricultural staple produced a very different urban hierarchical structure from that associated with the new mineral staple expansion after 1950. In the post-1950 era, the altered determinants became embodied in progressive change in the relative distribution of functions. Winnipeg's metropolitan dominance over the region was eroded and the structure of the urban hierarchy was altered significantly. A new urban structure of subregional systems based on metropolitan hegemony over new hinterlands developed, defined by lines of dependence created by the production functions and political economies of the new staples.

The production function of the agricultural staple involved small, independent, competitive production units, widely dispersed geographically. The metropolitan dominance of Winnipeg was not established or maintained by control over staple production, but rather by monopoly control over the commercial, financial and transportation services necessary to the marketing of agricultural products and the distribution of goods and services to the hinterland. Policy, mono-

poly of commercial, financial and transportation institutions, and the "gateway" geographic advantage of Winnipeg were the obvious generators of Winnipeg's metropolitan status. The subregional urban hierarchy extended the imperatives of railway technology and population distribution to the servicing of a dispersed agriculture. Prairie agriculture, therefore, constituted the "commercial empire" of Winnipeg.

Winnipeg's commercial empire did not come crashing down with the end of extensive agricultural development. Nor did it decline dramatically with Vancouver's emergence as an alternative "gateway," changes in freight rate policy, mechanization of agriculture, moderate changes in the composition of agricultural output, or the diffusion of economic power in the handling and marketing of grain. These changes did have an impact, eroding Winnipeg's economic dominance and diminishing the size of its hinterland, a gradual and more or less continuous process after the Great War.

What superimposes a completely different urban system in the prairie region is the emergence in the 1950s of new mineral, largely energy based, staples which have radically different production functions, income distributions, commercial, financial and transportation infrastructures, factor requirements, corporate institutions, policy frameworks and market orientations—in fact a very different political economy. Metropolitan hegemony is no longer exerted solely or even primarily through commercial control but through monopoly and multinational control of production as well. Income and linkage effects are concentrated in both geographical and functional terms. More recently, the policy shift initiated by the OPEC cartel has altered the distribution of rents to provincial governments but this has only served to reinforce the independence of the Saskatchewan and Alberta urban systems from Winnipeg's metropolitan sphere and still further to erode its hinterland.

Winnipeg's function in the grain trade and as a service and manufacturing centre for agriculture remains, not unimpaired perhaps, but still dominant. But what of development potential in a post-staple world? Clearly with the overall stagnation of the Canadian economy in the 1970s, particularly of the critical manufacturing sector, there is little to excite overt optimism.²⁷

NOTES

- ¹ The term 'urban system' in the context of this paper is meant to denote a functional economic/geographic relationship between urban centres based on a hierarchical specialization of support and service functions in relationship to the staple hinterland. While not formalized in the paper, the 'urban system' model and many similar and related models are surveyed in R. J. Chorley and P. Haggett, eds., *Socio-Economic Models in Geography* (London:

- Methuen, 1967). Specific reference can be made to F. E. I. Hamilton, "Models of Industrial Location," pp. 389-93; and B. J. Garner, "Model of Urban Geography and Settlement Location," pp. 322-35.
- ² A. S. Morton and Chester Martin, *History of Prairie Settlement and Dominion Lands Policy* (Toronto, 1938), pp. 142-43.
- ³ George Britnell, *The Wheat Economy* (Toronto, 1939), p. 23.
- ⁴ For a detailed discussion of urbanization in this period see Paul Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies, 1871-1916," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. VIII, No. 15 (May 1975), pp. 77-101; Alan F. J. Artibise, "The Urban West: The Evolution of Prairie Towns and Cities to 1930," *Prairie Forum*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1979), pp. 237-62.
- ⁵ R. C. Bellan, "The Development of Winnipeg as a Metropolitan Centre," Ph.D. Thesis (Columbia University, 1958); Donald Kerr, "Wholesale Trade on the Canadian Plains in the Late Nineteenth Century: Winnipeg and its Competition," in H. Palmer, ed., *The Settlement of the West* (Calgary, 1977), pp. 130-52. [A published version of Bellan's thesis is now available. It is *Winnipeg First Century: An Economic History* (Winnipeg, 1978). All references in this chapter, however, are to be original thesis.]
- ⁶ For a detailed discussion of the role of this group see Alan F. J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal and London, 1975).
- ⁷ A complete history can be found in Bellan, "Winnipeg."
- ⁸ The first exchange was established in 1883 but was not made a permanent institution until 1887. It was incorporated in 1891. See G. F. Parsons, "Winnipeg as a Financial Centre," in T. J. Kuz, ed., *Winnipeg, 1874-1974: Progress and Prospects* (Winnipeg, 1974), pp. 189-210.
- ⁹ Even by 1931 Manitoba accounted for just under half of prairie wholesaling employment, three quarters of it in Winnipeg. Applying the proportional distribution of wholesale employment in the trade industry category in 1931 to the trade and finance occupation distribution in 1911 would indicate that Manitoba accounted for approximately 51 per cent of wholesale employment. Since the trend of Manitoba's dominance is steadily down from 1931 on and the preferential rates had long since been removed, it is reasonable to suppose that considerably in excess of half of all wholesaling employment in the prairie region was centred in Manitoba in earlier years, mostly in and around Winnipeg.
- ¹⁰ Bellan, "Winnipeg," p. 226.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 197-98.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 202.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 372.
- ¹⁴ V. C. Fowke, *The National Policy and the Wheat Economy* (Toronto, 1957), p. 77.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- ¹⁶ W. A. Mackintosh, *The Economic Background of Dominion-Provincial Relations* (Toronto, 1964), p. 97.
- ¹⁷ M. L. Bladen, "Construction of Railways in Canada from 1885 to 1931," *Contributions to Canadian Economics*, Vol. 7 (1934), pp. 82-107.
- ¹⁸ Bellan, "Winnipeg," p. 303.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 308.
- ²⁰ For a discussion of the impact of the Ogden Shops on Calgary see M. Foran, *Calgary: An Illustrated History* (Toronto, 1978), pp. 79-82.
- ²¹ In large measure meatpacking was eastern or multinational controlled, although both Alberta (Burns) and Saskatchewan (Interprovincial) developed local (provincial) entrepreneurship. Control of butter and cheese production was much more widely distributed.
- ²² Actual values are as follows:

	Flour Milling	Slaughtering & Meat Packing	Butter and Cheese
1922			
Gross Value (\$000s)	40,437	23,579	17,845
Employment	1,917		
1951			
Gross Value (\$000s)	113,714	262,200	86,514
Employment	2,032	6,830	4,409

- ²³ Alternative export routes through Churchill and Prince Rupert also developed but their significance relative to Vancouver and Winnipeg, which effectively controlled the Lakehead, was minimal.
- ²⁴ Richard Caves and Richard Holton, *The Canadian Economy* (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 214-15.
- ²⁵ R. B. Short, "The Wholesale Function in Winnipeg," M. A. Thesis (University of Manitoba, 1973), p. 66.
- ²⁶ T. J. Kuz, "Metropolitan Winnipeg: Inter-Urban Relationships," in Kuz, *Winnipeg*, pp. 14-15.
- ²⁷ D. Hum, "The Future Economic Prospects of Winnipeg: An Analytical Speculation," in *ibid.*, pp. 239-48.

2. VICTORIA, VANCOUVER, AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1886-1914

ROBERT A. J. McDONALD

Between 1886, when the city of Vancouver was founded, and the outbreak of World War I, British Columbia experienced significant economic change. During this period, and particularly after the mid-1890s, it was transformed economically from an outward-looking maritime society connected by the Pacific Ocean to California, Great Britain, and various points on the Pacific Rim, into an inward-looking continental community. By 1910, this community was consumed by the rapid pace of its own internal growth and drawn inward by a sharp increase in the size of its population; the influence of the developing Canadian wheat economy; the extension of American railroads, financial capital, entrepreneurs, and technology into the north-west; and the expansion of British capital investment into the province. While the extraction and processing of natural resources continued to provide the basic character of economic growth in British Columbia, the subsidiary factor of markets and the relative importance of specific staples underwent considerable change as the old oceanic connections declined and the new mainland ones expanded. In response to this broad pattern of change Vancouver displaced Victoria as B.C.'s principal intermediary centre. Vancouver's destiny as a metropolis, suggested in the 1880s by the arrival of the CPR, was fulfilled only a decade later with the relative decline in importance of the maritime ties which had made Victoria the regional centre of the British north-west coast for fifty years. The changing roles of B.C.'s two leading cities, in fact, paralleled closely the stages of economic development through which the province passed during the period from 1886 to 1914.

* * *

British Columbia at the time of Vancouver's incorporation was very much a Pacific rather than a North American community. Until traversed by the Canadian Pacific the year before, the mountain ranges of British Columbia had made east-west lines of trade across Canada virtually impossible in the post-fur trade era. The Pacific coast had provided the principal transportation link between the north-west coast of North America and the outside world since the arrival of

Europeans to the area in the eighteenth century. Ocean shipping had become essential to the region's economy especially after the decline of the overland fur trade. Pacific sea lanes had been supplemented in 1869 by the Central Pacific Railway which was completed that year to the American west coast at San Francisco, making this transcontinental route the chief avenue of travel thereafter for politicians, traders and immigrants alike between British Columbia and the eastern side of the continent. Mail and telegraph service to B.C. also passed through the California centre.¹ Even then, British Columbia was tied to the system at San Francisco only by the sea.

TABLE I

EXPORTS FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA, BY VALUE AND
DESTINATION, 1881-1890

Countries Exported to	Value	Articles Exported
United States	\$20,695,226	Gold Dust, Coal, Fish, Hides
Great Britain	10,044,964	Salmon, Furs, Lumber
Australia	2,207,420	Salmon, Lumber
Chile	522,240	Lumber
China	518,142	Lumber, Coal
Peru	280,536	Lumber
Sandwich Islands	225,569	Coal, Salmon
Japan	134,515	Coal, Lumber
Mexico	85,109	Coal
Other	173,254	
Total	\$34,886,975	

SOURCES: Economic Council of British Columbia, *Statistics of Industry in British Columbia 1871 to 1934* (Victoria, 1935), Table T2; and Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers, 1882-1891, Tables of Trade and Navigation*.

The extraction and export of staple resources generated wealth in the province, and, as Table I indicates, the markets for these resources in the 1880s were found in Britain and around the Pacific Rim. In the twenty years following Confederation, salmon canning, sawmilling, and the North Pacific seal hunt replaced the mainland fur trade and placer gold mining as the leading staple industries in the Victoria-centred B.C. economy. In 1881, each of the two processing industries employing the largest number of labourers in British Columbia—salmon canning and sawmilling—involved the modification of staples; ten years later, 85 percent of B.C.'s exports were products of the mines, fisheries or forests.² California was the province's most important export market in the 1880s, followed by Great Britain. Seventy-five percent of the coal mined on Vancouver Island

in 1887 was sold in California,³ primarily to the state's railroads. The opening of new markets among Britain's working class provided the principal outlet for Fraser River canned salmon,⁴ the fastest growing export industry on the coast from the time of its inception in 1871 until the turn of the century. Both the pack of canned salmon and the cut of timber more than doubled in the 1890s (Table II), but salmon generated greater income for the coastal economy because of the higher value added to fish through processing and the larger proportion of canned salmon sold outside the province. During the twenty-year period to 1896 the value of canned salmon exports shipped

TABLE II
PRODUCTION OF VANCOUVER ISLAND COAL, B.C.
CANNED SALMON, AND B.C. LUMBER,* 1881-1920

Period	Coal Mined (million tons)	Salmon Canned (million cases)	Lumber Cut (million bd. ft.)	Percentage Increase Over Previous Decade		
				Coal	Canned Salmon	Lumber
1881-90	3.9	2.2	550			
1891-00	10.4	5.8	1,227	166.7	163.6	123.1
1901-10	12.0	7.4	5,921	15.4	27.6	374.4
1911-20	14.5	12.3	11,279	20.8	66.2	90.5

*Does not include shingle production or lath production after 1891; Carrothers does not indicate if lath production was included in his figures to 1890.

SOURCES: Period summary to 1890 for provincial lumber production found in W. A. Carrothers, "Forest Industries of British Columbia," in A. R. M. Lower, *The North American Assault on the Canadian Forest* (Toronto, 1918), p. 270; summaries for 1891-1920 compiled from statistics in Canada, Forestry Branch, Dep't. of the Interior, *Forest Products of Canada* (Ottawa, 1909), Bulletin No. 4, p. 19, and Economic Council of British Columbia, *Statistics of Industry in British Columbia 1871 to 1934* (Victoria, 1935), Table FY3. Figures for provincial canned salmon production were compiled from yearly statistics (available only from 1876) in J. N. Cobb, *Pacific Salmon Fisheries*, 4th ed., 1930, Fisheries Document No. 1092, p. 579. Vancouver Island coal production statistics were drawn from British Columbia, *Annual Reports of the Minister of Mines*, 1880-1920.

to external markets by sea increased five times as fast as the value of forest product exports.⁵ Prior to the creation of the prairie market for British Columbia lumber in the 1890s, lumber production on the coast, where the industry centred, was more dependent on local demand than was the case for either salmon or coal. Lumber that was exported, primarily from the two large sawmills on either side of Burrard Inlet, found its way to locations around the Pacific Ocean from California and Chile to Australia and China.⁶

The flow of entrepreneurship, financial capital, and technology into British Columbia, like markets, was determined by the west

coast's isolation from eastern North America and by the dominant reality of the Pacific Ocean. British Columbia's most obvious economic ties were with Britain, a continuing heritage of the influence established along the north-west coast of the continent by the seafaring British prior to Confederation. Industrial activity had been initiated almost exclusively by British-born entrepreneurs using British capital and British machinery. For instance, the sawmills organized in the 1860s by Captain Stamp on the Alberni Canal and by Stamp and Sewell Moody on Burrard Inlet were products of this tripartite influence of British entrepreneurship, capital, and technology.⁷ These ties continued through the 1870s and 1880s, with British capital supporting enterprises in each of mining, salmon canning, and sawmill industries. In 1891 four of the province's largest resource companies were controlled in Britain.⁸ British money also entered the area through land and financial institutions.⁹ Two of the three principal commercial banks in Victoria in the 1880s were London-based firms; the Bank of British North America had been established in the city in 1859, and the Bank of British Columbia in 1862. The latter was particularly important, with branches in west coast cities on both sides of the American border by 1864.

California was the other major source of economic influence in British Columbia from Confederation to the 1890s.¹⁰ The British character of economic life on Vancouver Island had been challenged by American interests in 1858 when the Fraser River gold rush brought a flood of miners and businessmen into the colonies from south of the border. Commercial ties between the principal cities of each region were firmly established during this period and were strengthened by the completion of a railway to the American west coast in 1869. The coastal trade thereafter was broadened through the increased movement of consumer goods from San Francisco into B.C., and the reciprocal trade to California of coal, in addition to gold. San Francisco financial capital found its way into British Columbia in the wake of these trade relations, reaching a peak in the 1880s; thirty percent of the Fraser River canning industry, both of the large sawmills on Burrard Inlet, and at least one coal mine on Vancouver Island, were financed at one time in the 1880s from California.¹¹ Private banking in Victoria had begun as an American-controlled extension of the export trade in B.C. gold to San Francisco and continued its close ties with the California metropolis until the demise in 1893 of Victoria's largest private bank, Garesche, Green and Company.¹² The large amount of capital invested in Robert Dunsmuir's Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway in the mid-1880s by California railroad entrepreneurs perhaps best exemplified the relationship between California demand for British Columbia's resources and the return flow of American financial capital into the province.

Two recent studies have suggested that the lines of influence tying British Columbia economically both to Great Britain and to California were not mutually exclusive.¹³ British interests were also strong in California, attracted there by the Pacific coast's largest export, wheat, and by the extension of British financial interests down the coast from British Columbia. Exports of California grain had attracted British shipping and financial houses like Balfour, Williamson and Company of Liverpool, and H. N. Dickson of London to the American west coast in the 1860s and 1870s, linking California with England's metropolitan centres. The San Francisco branches of these two particular firms later opened offices as far north as Seattle. The most important extension of British influence southward from British Columbia occurred with the establishment by the Bank of British Columbia of branches along the American west coast, starting with a branch in San Francisco in 1864. This bank in turn reinforced commercial links between California and B.C., serving, for instance, as banker for San Francisco's Andrew Welch and Company, until 1888 the parent firm of Victoria's Welch, Rithet and Company, one of Victoria's leading merchant houses. In the words of B.C. historian Keith Ralston, British Columbia in the 1880s was locked in a complex triangular relationship with California and Great Britain that "involved direct and independent links" between the two west coast societies and Britain, "as well as cross-connections with each other."¹⁴ All three were drawn together by the common pursuit of economic interests along the western edge of the North American continent.

The role of cities in relatively simple extractive economies is to facilitate the inflow of manufactured products and services to the hinterland economy and the outflow of natural products, some in a semi-processed form, to world markets.¹⁵ In British Columbia during the nineteenth century this function was served by Victoria, whose island location, fine harbour, and initial advantage made it the central intermediary point for the regional economy. Control of transportation reinforced the advantage of location; Victoria was a major point on the shipping lanes to San Francisco and London and a focus of regional services to the mainland and the north coast.¹⁶ Predominance in transportation provided the foundation for commercial hegemony by Victoria wholesalers and commission merchants. As late as 1893, Victoria's share (by value) of natural product exports shipped out to world markets and of highly processed imports brought in for regional consumption was approximately three times as great as the value of goods transferred through Vancouver.¹⁷ In turn, commercial capital derived from commerce was invested by Victoria merchants in the hinterland resource base. Since the inception of the industry, salmon canning in particular had been a favourite area for investment by Victoria merchants, who served as brokers, suppliers, and insurance

and shipping agents, as well as the source of much-needed short-term capital.¹⁸ By the early 1890s, Victoria money had also found its way into Kootenay and Burrard Inlet sawmills, Queen Charlotte coal lands, an Okanagan flour mill, and Vancouver land and utility enterprises.¹⁹ The regional headquarters of both London-based banks operating in B.C. were located in Victoria, enhancing the city's position as the financial, as well as the commercial, hub of the province. Though limited to small-scale operations serving the local market, Victoria's secondary manufacturing capacity was also the largest of any city in B.C.; in 1891 Victoria employed twice as many workers as its rival centres of Vancouver and New Westminster.²⁰ Victoria, in short, was the business metropolis of British Columbia during the period of coastal ascendancy, and its principal entrepreneurs formed the core of the province's business power.

Victoria's economic leadership in the 1880s and 1890s also found social and political expression. Many businessmen whose wealth had come from enterprises outside of the city eventually sought social respectability as members of Victoria society. Similarly, B.C.'s most influential politicians represented either "the interests or sentiments" of the capital city.²¹ Most political leaders were Islanders, and even mainland representatives such as John Robson, Forbes G. Vernon, and Colonel James Baker became residents of Victoria and thus sympathetic to its interests. Provincial governments from 1883 until the collapse of the administration of Victoria merchant John Turner in 1898 espoused "a continued series of the same political ideals," the principal of which was the exploitation of regional resources through the provision of public concessions to private interests.²² Victoria businessmen constituted both the governments that granted and the interests that received these concessions. While Victoria merchants controlled hinterland trade and investment, Victoria government promoted hinterland development.

Between 1883 and 1893 the completion of three transcontinental railways to the Pacific Northwest seriously challenged British Columbia's outward-looking economic system. Though the construction of the Northern Pacific into Idaho and Washington in the early 1880s was to have an important influence on southeastern British Columbia,²³ opening the Kootenays for a major mining boom in the 1890s, the greatest threat to the established economic order on the coast was presented by the Canadian Pacific Railway, the instrument of John A. Macdonald's deliberate attempt to create a transcontinental economy based on the integration of the Canadian West with the metropolitan centre of the St. Lawrence basin. The railway and tariff platforms of the Conservative Party's National Policy clearly implied economic and political integration between Canada and the traditionally isolated British Columbia.

Despite several claims to the contrary in historical literature,²⁴ the completion of the rail link with Canada did not bring about an immediate reorganization of the B.C. economy, nor did it destroy Victoria's position as the coast region's metropolitan centre. In fact, the railroad had surprisingly little impact on existing economic patterns along the B.C. coast for another decade. While some Canadian companies established commercial ties with British Columbia, especially machinery- and equipment-manufacturing companies from Montreal and the industrial belt of south-central Ontario,²⁵ such new commercial connections were not extensive; particularly noticeable by their absence in B.C. were branches of Toronto business firms. The province experienced no discernible influx of Canadian investment funds apart from capital from the CPR and its directors.²⁶ The resource industries exporting to external markets from the coastal region continued to develop according to established patterns: the salmon canning industry, which grew rapidly during the nineties, remained clearly part of the old Pacific trade system; the traditional California market still purchased two-thirds of the coal produced on Vancouver Island; and increased lumber production, which doubled in the 1890s over the previous ten years, was sold primarily to traditional Pacific Ocean markets or was consumed locally by construction booms in Vancouver and the Kootenays. The developing prairie market, first for shingles and then for lumber, emerged only very slowly through the decade.²⁷

The Kootenay mining booms, which peaked in waves at Nelson, in the Slocan Lake region, and at Rossland between 1887 and 1895, and the rapid growth of Vancouver from a lumber village in 1884-85 of 400 people to a substantial city in 1891 of over 13,000, would seem to belie the argument that continental railroads in both the U.S. and Canada had little economic impact on British Columbia; clearly both phenomena had been made possible by the opening of British Columbia to the east by rail. Yet, if the growth of the Kootenays and Vancouver are examined in terms of their impact on existing economic patterns in the province, little fundamental change in the relationship between the 'old' British Columbia centred in Victoria and the outside world can be found. The B.C. coast remained geographically isolated from the interior mining boom through the 1890s. No direct rail links tied the coast to the Kootenays, and the long road and water connections between the CPR's main line at either Golden or Revelstoke with the southeastern corner of the province placed both Victoria and Vancouver at a distinct disadvantage as service centres for this interior region, particularly when compared with Spokane, Washington. Minerals were exported from, and goods were imported into, the Kootenays until the late 1890s by American water and rail transport through Washington and Idaho, and particularly through the 'Inland Empire's' metropolitan centre of Spokane, rather than through the

geographically isolated coastal cities of B.C.²⁸ While some financial capital was organized on the coast for investment in Kootenay transport, land and smelter companies, initial risk capital for the development of Kootenay mining came primarily from the United States, to be supplanted by eastern Canadian and British financial capital in the 1895-1900 period after the area's mining industry had been firmly established. Little mining investment for producing companies was organized in the 1890s on the coast;²⁹ the forty mining brokers listed as residing in Vancouver in 1897 were far out-numbered by those in Spokane, and Vancouver's Charles Rand for one was forced eventually to take his mining brokerage business in 1897 from the coast to Sandon, and in 1898 to Spokane.³⁰

Neither was Vancouver's spectacular early growth symptomatic of a broader impact of equal intensity by the railroad on the economy of the province as a whole. Vancouver, the child of the CPR, was an enclave of self-perpetuating growth during its early years as a city, built like many other 'Rapid Cities' across the West in the 1880s more on "optimistic expectations of the impact of the railway," and in its particular case on the additional and solid base of CPR money, than on substantial links between the city and an expanding hinterland economy.³¹ The CPR did not stimulate significant expansion of the province's resource base and, as a consequence, did not reduce Victoria's function as the transfer, distribution, and financial centre for the salmon canning, lumber, and Island coal-mining industries which continued into the 1890s to export their products outward by sea. Nor, with the exception of the railroad's regional management function in Vancouver, the founding of Vernon in the Okanagan, and the development of hydraulic gold mining in the Cariboo, did Vancouver extend metropolitan influence beyond the Fraser Valley farming area immediately surrounding the city. Indeed, the arrival of the CPR at the coast reinforced (albeit temporarily) rather than undermined Victoria's role as the centre of B.C.'s maritime economic system. The services of coastal transportation companies such as John Irving's Canadian Pacific Navigation Company, the strength of existing Victoria-centred trading patterns, and the wealth of Victoria's merchant houses continued after 1886 to give the capital city a distinct advantage over Vancouver as a regional trade and investment metropolis, despite the terminal city's superior mainland location. The decision of the Davie administration in 1893 to construct expensive new legislative buildings in Victoria and thereby 'anchor' the province's government in the Island city marked the symbolic high-point of the coastal system which Victoria had controlled for fifty years.

Beginning in the 1890s and lasting until the economic slowdown before the First World War, the rapid expansion of the British Columbia economy and the strengthening of continental commercial ties brought an end to Victoria's regional hegemony. Preoccupation with development of the mainland economy made the coastal region much less dependent, for a period lasting into the 1920s, on its traditional outward links with world markets by sea and forced a reallocation of metropolitan functions which favoured Vancouver over its Island rival. Vancouver's triumph over Victoria, not only in population (Table III) but also in importance as a service, transfer, and management centre within the region, was thus a function of this new phase of provincial economic development.

TABLE III

POPULATION GROWTH IN B.C., VICTORIA AND VANCOUVER, 1871-1921

	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
British Columbia	36,247	49,459	98,173	178,657	392,480	524,582
Victoria	3,270	5,925	16,841	20,919	31,660	38,727
Vancouver	—	—	13,709	27,010	100,401	117,217

SOURCE: *Sixth Census of Canada 1921*, Vol. I, Tables I and XII, pp. 3 and 234.

Economic expansion reflected dynamic population growth in British Columbia. Whereas the province's population had increased by 80,000 in the 1890s, it swelled by 214,000 in the first ten years of the new century. Development of coal and timber resources in the Crow's Nest Pass and East Kootenay districts led to a population increase between 1901 and 1911 of 14,000.³² The West Kootenays stagnated after the boom of the 1890s, but copper mining and copper smelting flourished further west in the Boundary country around Greenwood and Grand Forks.³³ The Okanagan region continued its transformation, begun in the nineties, from a ranching to a fruit farming economy; total acreage in the valley soared from 7,430 acres in 1901 to 100,000 acres in 1909,³⁴ and the population of the Okanagan and Boundary regions together rose by 16,000, double the amount of the previous decade. The north coast gained in economic importance as the salmon canning industry, traditionally centred on the Fraser River, decentralized to the northern waters of the Nass and Skeena Rivers and Rivers and Smiths Inlets,³⁵ and as Prince Rupert emerged as the terminus of a second transcontinental railway running through the province. Rail construction generated jobs for construction workers, markets for

urban distributors and building materials manufacturers, and speculative profits for investors in land and resources. It also drew new immigrants and investment: to the routes of the Grand Trunk from Edmonton through Fort George to Prince Rupert at the mouth of the Skeena; to the Canadian Northern Pacific from Edmonton through the Yellowhead Pass, Kamloops, and the Fraser Valley to Vancouver; and to such secondary lines as the Kettle Valley Railway from the Boundary district to the Fraser River. Vancouver Island grew by 30,000 people, of whom 11,000 were located in the central Comox-Alberni area. Of particular note is the contrast between Vancouver Island and the southwestern corner of the mainland, stretching from the upper end of the Fraser Valley, through New Westminster and Vancouver, and up the coast as far as Bute Inlet. In the 1891-1901 period, the Island expanded by 15,000 and the lower mainland by 12,000; in the following decade, the Island's increase of 30,000 was more than quadrupled on the mainland opposite. The major portion of this increase occurred in Vancouver, which had become British Columbia's largest city by 1901 and Canada's fourth largest city by 1911.

Enlargement of the population base spurred the expansion of British Columbia's workforce from 47,000 to 206,000 during the twenty years after 1891 (Table IV). While the basis of this growth continued to be rooted in the extraction and processing of the province's natural resources, as it had been during the earlier coastal period, the economy now exhibited signs of increased specialization. One indication was the greater emphasis on the forestry sector and less on fishing, hunting, and agriculture. Another was the decline in manufacturing other than in the wood products field, which further reinforced the province's dependence on the large-scale extraction and modification of staples. While some residentiary manufacturing of consumers' goods for the local market and auxiliary manufacturing and modification of production equipment for the resource sector did take place in the province, on the whole the local market was too small and B.C. was too isolated, by distance and freight rates, for local industrialists to be able to compete successfully with eastern and foreign manufacturers in the production of highly processed end products. Per capita manufacturing output in B.C. rose to a peak in 1900 with the "rapid expansion of local manufacturing on a small scale"; it declined thereafter in part as a result of improved interprovincial transportation and increased trade.³⁶ A growing complexity accompanied this specialization, for, as the resource base grew, so too did the need for auxiliary services. As the statistics in Table IV indicate, over the period from 1891 to 1911, transportation and utilities, construction, trade, finance, and government administration together increased as a proportion of the total labour force by a significant nineteen percent.

TABLE IV

LABOUR FORCE, BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR,
BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1891 AND 1911

	Work Force (thousands)		Percentage Distribution	
	1891	1911	1891	1911
Agriculture	8.3	24.4	17.7	11.8
Extractive Sector:	10.3	32.0	22.0	15.6
— Forestry	1.1	11.8	2.3	5.7
— Mining	4.7	15.6	10.0	7.6
— Fishing	3.8	4.0	8.1	1.7
— Hunting & Trapping	.7	.6	1.5	.3
Manufacturing Sector:	6.4	35.0	13.6	17.0
— Wood Products	1.1	14.7	2.3	7.1
— Fish Canning	1.2	4.2	2.6	2.0
— Other Manufacturing	4.1	16.1	8.7	7.8
Construction	3.5	24.1	7.5	11.7
Service Sector:	18.4	90.5	39.2	43.8
— Transportation & Utilities	3.9	29.6	8.3	14.4
— Trade	2.9	17.2	6.2	8.3
— Services	11.0*	27.5	23.5*	13.4
— Finance	.2	5.5	.4	2.7
— Public Administration	.4	10.7	.9	5.2
Total Labour Force	46.9	206.0	100.0	100.0

*Figures probably biased on the high side by the inclusion in the 'Service' category of the 1891 Census of 4,645 labourers of an unspecified kind; this represents 42.3% of the 'Services' category of the above table for 1891.

SOURCE: *Third Census of Canada 1891*, Vol. II, Table XII, pp. 140-45; and *Fifth Census of Canada 1911*, Vol. VI, Table V, pp. 74-94.

The changes in B.C.'s economic base which altered the relative importance of Vancouver and Victoria are suggested by the post-1900 production levels and market locations of the three staple commodities, coal, salmon, and timber, that had been crucial to the export economy of coastal B.C. in the nineteenth century (Table II). After 1900, markets, technology, and entrepreneurship in the coastal canning industry continued to follow established maritime patterns, in which Britain remained the largest market for B.C. salmon, and new techniques and management skills tended to move up the coast from the Columbia River and down the coast from Alaska.³⁷ But canned salmon failed to maintain the high level of expansion that had made it the leading export industry on the coast in the 1890s. Large profits (and the even greater illusion of profits), the small amount of fixed

capital needed to establish a cannery, and the ready availability of short-term financing had produced substantial growth in the salmon processing industry in the 1890s; between 1889 and 1901 the number of canneries in operation and the pack of canned salmon had tripled.³⁸ But the size of the market and the nature of the resource put severe limitations on the continued long-term growth of canning.³⁹ These factors, plus the problem of overexpansion during the nineties, restricted increased production during the following ten-year period to a mere 28 percent. While salmon canning represented the persistence into the twentieth century of B.C.'s traditional maritime economic connections, the industry's role as a leading agent of provincial economic growth belonged to the nineteenth.

The Island coal mining industry, which had been a central link in B.C.'s trade connections with California, was also mainly a nineteenth rather than a twentieth century growth industry. The doubling of provincial coal output between 1897 and 1914 was due primarily to the development of coal mines in the Crow's Nest Pass, where coke was produced for smelters in the Kootenays, Montana, and Washington, and coal for the Canadian Pacific and Great Northern Railways.⁴⁰ The increase in Island coal production dropped from a growth level of 167 percent in the 1890s to a low 15 percent and 21 percent in the following decades (Table II). Vancouver Island coal faced severe market dislocations starting in the late 1890s as fuel oil was substituted for coal by California railroads,⁴¹ virtually destroying this traditional coastal market (Table V). Reflecting the increased importance of internal

TABLE V

PERCENTAGE OF VANCOUVER ISLAND COAL EXPORTED
TO THE U.S.A. AND SOLD IN CANADA, 1887-1908*

Year	Total Sales ('000 Tons)	Exports to the U.S.A.		Sales in Canada	
		('000 Tons)	Percent	('000 Tons)	Percent
1887	434.1	334.8	(77.1)	99.2	(22.8)
1897	910.2	619.9	(68.1)	290.3	(31.8)
1902	985.9	673.5	(68.3)	310.8	(31.5)
1903	756.6	400.7	(52.9)	353.2	(46.6)
1908	1,019.1	300.4	(29.4)	688.7	(67.5)

*Almost all V.I. coal exported to the U.S.A. was sold in California (97.1% in 1887 and 90.1% in 1897). The 29,238 tons of coal mined in the Nicola Valley in 1908 have been deleted from the V.I. production figures in the above table, and from the figures for V.I. coal sales in Canada, where Nicola Valley coal most likely found its market.

SOURCE: *Annual Report of the Minister of Mines, British Columbia, 1887* (Victoria, 1887), pp. 281-82, and similar reports for 1897, pp. 620-621; 1902, pp. H17-H18; 1903, pp. H18-H19; and 1908, pp. J18-J20.

growth in B.C. as a major stimulant in the post-1900 provincial economy, sales of B.C. coal in California were replaced by greater consumption within the home region, the latter providing a full two-thirds of the market for Island coal by 1908. The appropriate conclusion to this break with the maritime economic system of old came with the purchase of the Dunsmuir family's Wellington Coal Company in 1910 by William Mackenzie and Donald Mann of Toronto, builders of the Canadian Northern.

Logging and wood products manufacturing, in sharp contrast to salmon canning and Island coal mining, experienced phenomenal growth in the early years of the new century. Lumber emerged as the 'king of the industries' in both Vancouver and throughout the province in the decade after 1900. The quantity of lumber cut in British Columbia rose by 374 percent between 1901 and 1910 (see Table II); the percentage of the provincial work force engaged in the extractive sector of the forest industry, such as logging, more than doubled between 1891 and 1911, while the percentage working in the wood products manufacturing sector, especially in sawmills, more than tripled (see Table IV). A whole new section of British Columbia, the East Kootenays, where lumber had previously been manufactured on a small scale for railroads, mines, and other local markets, was open to large-scale production after the completion of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway. By 1913, mountain manufacturers were producing one-third of the total lumber output in a province where lumber had traditionally been a coastal industry.⁴²

This dramatic increase in lumber production is explained in part by the rapid expansion of the local market for wood products in British Columbia to 40 percent of all lumber shipments from coastal mills (Table VI). Equally important was the opening of a new continental export market for B.C. lumber and shingles. The more than one million people who settled on the prairies between 1896 and 1911 created an almost insatiable demand for cheap building materials, a demand met principally from British Columbia. Approximately two-thirds of the lumber sold by B.C. mills between 1910 and 1914 was shipped inland by rail, including, for example, almost all of the timber cut in the mountain region on the eastern side of the province. Noteworthy as an indicator of economic change in B.C. was the development of a trade connection, initiated in the 1890s, between the coast lumber industry and the prairie hinterland. Lumber exports shipped inland by rail from Pacific coast mills increased by fifteen times between 1900 and 1913 (Table VII), by which time over half the coast industry's much expanded capacity had become geared to the prairie market. This sharp increase in the overland trade was accompanied by a decline from 84 to 46 million board feet (45 percent) over the same

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF B.C. LUMBER SHIPMENTS, 1910-14

Type	Volume (million bd. ft.)	Percentage Distribution	
		Of Coast Shipments	Of All B.C. Shipments
Coast Mills:	3,496		
— Rail Shipments	1,834	52.5	34.7
— Local Sales	1,414	40.4	26.8
— Exports by Water	248	7.1	4.7
Mountain Mills*	1,782		
— Rail Shipments	1,782		33.8
Totals*	5,278	100.0%	100.0%

*Local consumption of lumber produced in Interior B.C. mills is unknown, but was probably only a fraction of area production. See the Victoria Board of Trade, *Thirtieth Annual Report, 1909* (Victoria, 1909), p. 79 and the Vancouver Board of Trade, *Annual Report, 1912-13* (Vancouver, 1913), p. 65 and *Annual Report, 1913-14* (Vancouver, 1914) p. 57. Inventories are also omitted from the Table.

SOURCE: W. A. Carrothers, "Forest Industries of British Columbia," in A. R. M. Lower, *The North American Assault on the Canadian Forest* (Toronto, 1938), p. 271.

TABLE VII

LUMBER EXPORTS FROM COASTAL B.C.: SELECTED YEARS

Year	Volume (million bd. ft.)		Percentage Distribution	
	By Rail	By Water	By Rail	By Water
1900	26	84	23.7	76.3
1913	392	46	89.5	10.5

SOURCES: Vancouver Board of Trade, "Board of Trade Reports of Lumber Shipments for the Years 1897-1915," manuscript, Provincial Library of British Columbia; and Vancouver Board of Trade, *Annual Report, 1913-14* (Vancouver, 1914), p. 57.

fourteen-year period in the volume of waterborne shipments of lumber from B.C. to Pacific Ocean ports. A mere 4.5 percent of the lumber sold from all B.C. mills in 1913 was exported by water, but the loss of potential Pacific Rim markets was more than compensated for by increased demand in the province, and on the prairies. By 1914 the "Canadian prairies had become the most important, almost the only, outside market for British Columbia lumber."⁴³

The spectacular growth of the prairie wheat economy played an important part after the mid-1890s in integrating the "economically

loose transcontinental area" of Canada⁴⁴ and was a major reason for the continental rather than maritime orientation of economic development in B.C. during the early years of the twentieth century. Lower transfer costs from the centre of the North American continent to Europe, increased prices for cereal grains, and the dwindling supply of free land in the American West all served from the 1890s to the 1920s to divert large numbers of immigrants into the wheat economy of Canada's prairie West. The production of wheat not only attracted labour and capital to the land but "induced investment throughout the economy in major secondary and tertiary industries and, through these, in housing and other community facilities greater by many times than the investment on the agricultural frontier itself."⁴⁵ So compelling was the trend to economic integration across Canada that regions even at the periphery of the nation, including British Columbia, were drawn inward by its pervasive force.

Strong inter-regional ties between Canada's two western regions, spawned by the creation of prairie markets for B.C. forest products and Okanagan fruit, were the principal manifestations in British Columbia of these integrating forces. The expansion of economic opportunity in the West also sparked new central Canadian interest in B.C., interest which had its greatest effect on the Pacific province's commercial and railroad development. The influx of Canadian commercial and financial interests into coastal B.C. appears to have followed an initial attraction to the wheat economy of the prairies and especially the mining frontiers of the Kootenays and the Yukon. For example, the desire to participate in the "great mining districts of Western Canada" had prompted the Canadian Bank of Commerce to jump from Winnipeg into the previously unknown territory of British Columbia.⁴⁶

The new consciousness of British Columbia in the minds of eastern business interests, especially those in Toronto, was first evident in the southeastern interior of the province. Construction in 1897 and 1898 of the CPR line through the Crow's Nest Pass, which released the area's coal deposits for development, was accompanied by the organization of the \$2 million Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company by a Toronto syndicate headed by Senator George Cox.⁴⁷ John Church has shown that in the same period a definite shift to British and eastern Canadian from American ownership occurred in the metal mining industries of the West Kootenay and Boundary districts.⁴⁸ Included was the formation in 1897 of the \$2 million War Eagle Consolidated Mining and Development Company by a Toronto-based firm led by distiller George Gooderham and the CPR's purchase in 1898 of the American-owned smelter at Trail.⁴⁹ Canadian banks were not far behind, entering the area in 1898 with the establishment of Bank of Commerce branches at Fernie, Cranbrook and Greenwood.

Canadian interest in the mining areas of the province was accompanied by an influx of businessmen⁵⁰ and branch companies from central Canada to the Pacific seaboard, and particularly to Vancouver. In 1895, the Imperial Bank of Canada established a branch in Vancouver, and was followed there in 1898 by the Merchants Bank of Halifax, Molsons Bank, and the Canadian Bank of Commerce; two years later the Commerce, hoping to consolidate its recently established business position in B.C., absorbed the British-owned Bank of British Columbia.⁵¹ During the 1898 to 1903 period, a covey of eastern fire and life insurance companies and several wholesale and manufacturing firms formed branches on the west coast, locating their regional operations, as had the Canadian banks, mainly in Vancouver. The Canadianization of entrepreneurship in Vancouver in the late 1890s, and in particular an infusion of new business talent from Ontario, paralleled the larger movement of Canadian commercial interests into the province. Whereas in the early 1890s 14 percent more of Vancouver's leading businessmen had originated in Britain than in Canada, by 1910 the city's business community had become decidedly more Canadian than British.⁵²

The addition of 14,000 miles to the country's rail network from 1906 to 1915 represented a major component of the investment boom induced across Canada by the rapid development of the wheat economy on the prairies. The investment in railways, which "accounted for 23.4 percent of the national expenditure on all structures and machinery and equipment" in the ten years to 1915,⁵³ extended into British Columbia through the construction to the west coast of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, starting in 1908, and the Canadian Northern Pacific three years later. At the peak of their construction, these two railroads employed 10,000 workers in B.C., and the resulting "demands for lumber and supplies injected a new dynamism" into the provincial economy.⁵⁴ No less important was their role in producing the speculative climate that enveloped the province from 1909 to 1913. While the McBride government's land, timber, and railway bonusing policies, and the ready availability of cheap investment money were necessary prerequisites to this speculative growth, so too was the psychological ambience created in the province by anticipated and actual railroad construction. As the *British Columbia Financial Times* noted on May 16, 1914, Vancouver's exceptional rate of growth during the previous few years had been founded not "upon the excellent future prospects for increased development of existing trade territory," but rather upon the "expectations" created by "the fact that enormous new areas of varied agricultural, mineral and timber resources in British Columbia were about to be opened by the building of...two new Canadian transcontinentals..." The areas of most intense resource

speculation were along the routes of the national railroads, especially the Grand Trunk, and at the coastal termini of the two lines.

The extent to which mainland British Columbia's substantial economic growth stemmed from closer integration with the national economy should not be exaggerated, however, for B.C. remained much less closely tied to central Canada than did other parts of the country, especially the prairies. Canadian financial capital played an important role in southeastern B.C. in the late 1890s, in the reorganization of the coast salmon canning industry in 1902, and in a number of large timber, land, sawmill, and coal mining enterprises in B.C. before 1914, but the exact volume of such Canadian investment in the province's resource sector remains unknown. In addition, while eastern Canadians established trading outlets in B.C. for their highly processed manufactured goods, trade in British Columbia products eastward beyond the prairies was virtually non-existent.⁵⁵ A protective tariff which reinforced the initial advantage of central Canadian manufacturers in producing high value end goods for a national market, the small size of the regional market in B.C., and higher freight rates for most goods moving inland from western Canada than from the East precluded the development of a substantial secondary manufacturing capacity west of the Rockies.⁵⁶ In particular, the high freight rates in the mountain regions of B.C. gave eastern shippers, and merchants in intermediary locations such as Winnipeg, control of the trade in western Canada as far west as Revelstoke in British Columbia.⁵⁷ Only a few products distributed from the coast had a comparative advantage in the prairie market over supplies from the East. As late as 1916, B.C.'s coastal cities still had little commercial presence in the Boundary and Kootenay regions of the province, where trade was dominated by Winnipeg, Calgary, and Spokane.⁵⁸

"Typically," says economist Douglass North, "the capital in young regions comes from outside."⁵⁹ In British Columbia's case, the limitations imposed by capital formation within the region and within Canada as a whole were overcome by the substantial inflow into the province of growth-producing financial capital from the United States, Britain, and continental Europe, particularly the first two. The importance of American investment in Canada stemmed not only from its scale but also from the preference of Americans for direct private investment in manufacturing enterprises and land, timber, and mining properties. In British Columbia, interest focussed clearly on natural products, especially minerals and timber. American investors were so influenced by the profit potential of British Columbia resource development that almost half of all American capital invested in Canada by 1909, amounting to \$122.5 million of a total \$254 million, had been attracted to the Pacific Coast.⁶⁰

Americans had been active in southeastern British Columbia since the opening of the lode mining frontier in 1887 and continued so in the expanding copper industry after 1900 through control of the two largest companies in the Boundary area, the Granby Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company, and the British Columbia Copper Company. With the support of American capital, copper production in B.C. increased by 400 percent between 1900 and 1914, mainly in the Boundary district along the American border, while by contrast B.C.'s output of base metals, silver, and gold had levelled off by the turn of the century. The Great Northern Railway, in addition to tapping the trade of the province's southern Interior by crossing the border at as many as sixteen different points, was also active in B.C. mining, with investments in the Crow's Nest Pass coal mining industry and with ties through interlocking directorships to Granby Consolidated.⁶¹

Most significant for the inward orientation of the province's economic development after the mid-1890s was American participation in the B.C. lumber industry. The influx of capital and entrepreneurs from the United States was the industry's distinguishing feature during the decade after 1900. Money and men now emanated from the very heart of the continent in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, moving from the logged-out forests of north-central United States to the virgin timber stands of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. American penetration of B.C. was strongest in the Kootenays, where it occurred first, but was also significant in the coast lumber industry by the later years of the decade. Lumbermen came as industrial capitalists, bringing with them both skills and seemingly "inexhaustible amounts of capital," and made B.C. their adopted home.⁶² Already a major factor in the lumber industry by 1906, American capital was clearly the dominant source of all capital for lumber by 1909. While the total investment in the B.C. lumber industry did not exceed \$2 million in 1900, American investment alone equalled \$65 million ten years later.⁶³ In November 1909, the *Western Lumberman* estimated that 75 percent of the province's timber holdings were under American control and that "at least 50 percent of the money invested in saw and shingle mills" had come from the United States. Five years later the editor of *The Monetary Times* suggested that two-thirds of the lumber mills in the interior and one-third on the coast were backed by American capital.⁶⁴

While the volume of British money invested in the lumber production facilities in B.C. was small by comparison with American investment in the industry, nine British-controlled firms did operate in the province, and substantial amounts of British fixed-interest debt capital, equalling three million dollars in one instance, were made available to locally-controlled lumber companies in the pre-war years.⁶⁵ Both the extent of this British direct investment in the lumber

industry in B.C. and the policy of lending British non-ownership portfolio capital to private industrial enterprises in Canada were relatively new occurrences before 1914, reflecting the sharp increase in the overall movement of British financial capital into the country and the changed nature of British capital exports. The inflow of all British financial capital into Canada rose dramatically after 1907, increasing by six times between that year and 1913.⁶⁶ In addition, while the British preference for conservative investments in social overhead capital requirements continued, it was modified in the pre-war period by a new willingness to venture into the riskier private sector.⁶⁷ The interest of British investors in the potentially profitable resource sectors of recently settled areas such as western Canada, combined with the associational factors in a region with a British population and British-born entrepreneurs,⁶⁸ made B.C. a particularly attractive location for the investment of British venture capital. This new influx of financial capital arrested a decline in British money flow into the private sector in B.C. which had been evident since the peak of British investment in the Kootenay mining industry in the last half of the 1890s.⁶⁹ A substantial amount of the new capital went into Canadian manufacturing, other than branch plants, and into western Canadian resources and the related mortgage financing sector: both were essential factors in making possible the expansion of resource manufacturing capacity; the speculation in land, timber, and minerals; and the rapid urban growth that characterized the British Columbia economy after 1909.

Britain also contributed substantially to the expansion of British Columbia's labour force. Statistics for the sources of growth of the Canadian population ten years of age and older reveal that, in British Columbia between 1901 and 1911, a natural population increase of 16,000 contrasted with an increase through immigration of 164,000.⁷⁰ Britain provided the largest portion of these immigrants. The British-born population of the province expanded by 85,000 in the decade after 1901, increasing from 18 to 30 percent in the B.C. total; the Canadian-born population grew by 69,700, of whom 41,000 had migrated from other parts of the country. In other words, twice as many new immigrants came to B.C. from Britain and its possessions as from other parts of Canada, even though the influx of Canadian-born migrants had itself more than doubled from the average of the previous two decades.⁷¹

Substantial economic growth brought changes to the province's urban structure, the most outstanding of which was Vancouver's emergence as the region's largest city and its metropolitan centre. The principal source of Vancouver's growth was its link to the area's resource base. Economic growth ancillary to the resource base concentrated in Vancouver because the city's special locational advantages allowed lower transfer costs for incoming and outgoing goods to and

from the mainland. With the shift in B.C. from an outward to inward economic orientation, these lower transportation costs, made possible by its fine harbour, mainland location, and CPR connection, gave Vancouver a crucial trade advantage over Victoria. The value of imports into the province by sea increased during the 1900-14 period at a much faster rate than the value of exports, in contrast to the faster growth of exports in the 1890s; Vancouver's lead over Victoria as the principal port of entry on the coast, which it had assumed for the first time in 1899, widened accordingly.⁷² Major new wholesale houses emerged in Vancouver in the 1895-1905 period, asserting the city's position as B.C.'s pre-eminent trade centre. The value of bank clearances in the terminal city also eclipsed those in Victoria in the late 1890s.⁷³ Vancouver's position as the financial metropolis of the region was confirmed when the Canadian Bank of Commerce assumed control of the Bank of British Columbia; the Victoria-based British bank of the old system was now replaced by the Vancouver-based Canadian bank of the new.

Additional services to the province's hinterland base collected in the centre which offered the most attractive trade and transportation advantages for intercourse with the regional economy. With the changing pattern of economic growth in B.C., the province's expanding service, finance, trade, and auxiliary manufacturing activities became increasingly mainland rather than Island functions. The census of 1911 shows that, with only 28 percent of the provincial work force, Vancouver employed 37 percent of the province's building trades workers and more than 40 percent of those engaged in finance, in real estate, in the professions, and in the iron and steel products manufacturing sectors; by contrast, Victoria's totals for these five categories ranged from 9 to 12.7 percent.⁷⁴

The urbanization economies provided by the clustering of trade, financial, transportation, and other services in Vancouver also made that city a resource industry management hub. As staples extraction and processing industries became more heavily capitalized, the multi-plant and often externally-controlled companies that resulted centred their management functions at the location in the region offering the best transportation, communication, and other urban services. The technologically sophisticated lode mining industry of the Kootenays had been organized in the 1890s into heavily capitalized and externally controlled companies;⁷⁵ however, the isolation of the region from other areas in B.C. had precluded industry management from locating in coastal B.C. cities. Such was not the case in the salmon canning and forest industries.⁷⁶ The amalgamation in 1902 of 29 of 48 canning plants on the Fraser River and of twelve additional factories in northern B.C. waters into one large limited liability company, the

British Columbia Packers' Association, marked a fundamental change in the financial structure of the industry.⁷⁷ The new corporation had been promoted by a Toronto investment dealer and by banks in both Toronto and Montreal, incorporated in New Jersey and backed by American and eastern Canadian capital. The Victoria merchant community, traditional source of capital for the coast canning industry, was the principal casualty of the reorganization, with canneries previously controlled on Vancouver Island now owned by the larger corporation centred in Vancouver. When B.C.'s leading lumber manufacturer of the 1890-1910 period, John Hendry, moved in 1903 from New Westminster to Vancouver's West End, he certified Vancouver's position as the principal management centre for the B.C. forest industry, a position reinforced over the following decade by the subsequent emergence in Vancouver of many large lumber corporations. Vancouver also became the centre for much of the speculation that occurred in urban land and hinterland resources during the boom years before the war. By the eve of the Great War, Vancouver headquartered just over half the province's 3,422 local companies, and two-thirds of the 1,716 extra-provincial and foreign companies that had migrated to B.C.⁷⁸ In 1911, Vancouver contained proportionately more than twice as many brokers and clerks as any other city in the country,⁷⁹ a measure of the importance to Vancouver of this speculative activity.

The business success of lumberman and capitalist A. D. McRae⁸⁰ in British Columbia before 1914 provides graphic illustration of the relationship between patterns of economic change in the province and the emergence of Vancouver as B.C.'s principal metropolitan centre. Born originally to a farm family in the London area of southwestern Ontario, McRae had established his career in banking and insurance in Duluth, Minnesota, before entering the land colonization business in Saskatchewan in 1902. He and a partner netted nine million dollars on the sale of 5.5 million acres of Saskatchewan land before 1909, 4 million acres of which they had sold as agents of railroad promoters Mackenzie and Mann. McRae first invested this profit in B.C. in 1907 when, in partnership with Senator Jensen of Nebraska, he assumed control of the old Ross-MacLaren sawmill on the Fraser River east of New Westminster, reorganizing the business into the Fraser River Lumber Company. In response to the expanding prairie lumber market, McRae and Jensen proceeded to build a huge new mill on the original site and to acquire 75,000 acres of timber on Vancouver Island stretching from Comox to Campbell River. Their links with Mackenzie and Mann were strengthened in 1909 when McRae and his partner entered into an agreement to act as selling agents for land at the Canadian Northern's proposed western terminus of Port Mann, and again in 1910 when the eastern railroad entrepreneurs helped

finance the amalgamation of the Fraser River Lumber Company and the Columbia River Lumber Company of Golden, B.C. into the Canadian Western Lumber Company, a Toronto-based corporation with a capital limit of \$10 million. The timber limits controlled by the new corporation were the largest in the world, with the possible exception of those controlled by the Weyerhaeuser interests in the United States. The following year, in order to acquire a monopoly over the salmon processing capacity of the northern British Columbia coast, the irrepressible McRae organized the \$2 million Wallace Fisheries Ltd. Wallace Fisheries, like Canadian Western Lumber, was backed by financial capital from areas east of British Columbia; four of the largest shareholders apart from McRae and local canning entrepreneur Peter Wallace came from Minneapolis, Winnipeg, and Idaho.⁴¹ As vice-president and managing-director of Canadian Western Lumber, now the largest lumber corporation in the province, and president of Wallace Fisheries, one of the province's three largest fishing and fish processing enterprises, the Vancouver-based McRae had emerged by 1911 as B.C.'s leading industrialist. With the completion in 1912 of his fabulously expensive mansion in Shaughnessy Heights, he not only asserted his family's claim to a position of social prominence in the province but also reaffirmed Vancouver's status, established since the turn of the century, as the new social centre of the region. In his business and social capacity, McRae served as a fitting successor to Vancouver Island's Robert Dunsmuir, builder of Victoria's Craigdarroch Castle and leading industrialist in the coastal economy of a departed era; each represented a distinctive phase in the economic and metropolitan development of British Columbia.

NOTES

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² Richard E. Caves and Richard H. Holton, *The Canadian Economy: Prospect and Retrospect* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), p. 220; and the British Columbia Board of Trade (Victoria), *Annual Report, 1899* (Victoria, 1899), p. 55.

³ See Table V.

⁴ H. K. Ralston, "Patterns of Trade and Investment on the Pacific Coast, 1867-1892: The Case of the British Columbia Salmon Canning Industry," *BC Studies*, No. 1 (Winter 1968-1969), p. 40.

⁵ Economic Council of British Columbia, *Statistics of Industry in British Columbia 1871 to 1934* (Victoria, 1935), Tables T5 and T6.

⁶ Joseph C. Lawrence, "Markets and Capital: A History of the Lumber Industry of British Columbia (1778-1952)," M.A. Thesis (U.B.C., 1957), pp. 11-15; and Letterbook, Hastings Saw Mill Company Papers, Add. Ms. 27, Vancouver City Archives.

⁷ W. Kaye Lamb, "Edward Stamp," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. X (Toronto, 1972), pp. 664-65; Lamb, "Sewell Prescott Moody," *ibid.*, pp. 530-31; L. B. Dixon, *The Birth of the Lumber Industry in British Columbia* (n.p., 1956), pamphlet, Special Collections, U.B.C., pp. 8-10 and 11-17; and Lawrence, "Markets and Capital," pp. 16-23 and 24-25.

⁸ The four were the New Vancouver Coal Co. Ltd., British Columbia Canning Co. Ltd., the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Co. Ltd., and the reorganized Moodyville Land and Sawmill Ltd. See *Victoria Illustrated* (Victoria, 1891), p. 70; H. K. Ralston, "The 1900 Strike of Fraser River Sockeye Salmon Fishermen," M.A. Thesis (U.B.C., 1965), pp. 23 and 25; and Lawrence, "Markets and Capital," p. 28.

- ⁹ The most important British land company operating in B.C. was the British Columbia Land and Investment Agency Ltd., incorporated in 1887. See *Victoria Illustrated*, p. 93; and the *Daily News-Advertiser*, May 11, 1895, p. 6. For the two British banks in Victoria, see *Victoria Illustrated*, pp. 60-62; and Victor Ross, "The Bank of British Columbia," in *A History of the Canadian Bank of Commerce*, Vol. 1 (Toronto, 1920), pp. 251-350.
- ¹⁰ See J. M. S. Careless, "The Business Community in the Early Development of Victoria, British Columbia," in J. Friesen and H. K. Ralston, eds., *Historical Essays on British Columbia* (Toronto, 1976), pp. 177-200.
- ¹¹ Ralston, "Patterns of Trade," p. 41; Lawrence, "Markets and Capital," pp. 26-29; and *Victoria Illustrated*, p. 64.
- ¹² Tom Naylor, *The History of Canadian Business, 1867-1914*, Volume 1, *The Banks and Finance Capital* (Toronto, 1975), pp. 177-78; and *Victoria Illustrated*, pp. 56 and 62.
- ¹³ Ralston, "Patterns of Trade," pp. 37-45; and J. M. S. Careless, "The Lowe Brothers, 1852-1870: A Study in Business Relations on the North Pacific Coast," *BC Studies*, No. 2 (Summer 1969), pp. 1-18. Also see Careless, "Business Community," *passim*; and Rodman W. Paul, "The Wheat Trade Between California and the United Kingdom," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 45 (1958), pp. 391-412.
- ¹⁴ Ralston, "Patterns of Trade," p. 45.
- ¹⁵ See Douglass North, "Location Theory and Regional Economic Growth," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. LXXXIII (1955), p. 251; and L. D. McCann, "Urban Growth in a Staple Economy: The Emergence of Vancouver as a Regional Metropolis, 1886-1914," in L. J. Evenden, ed., *Vancouver: Western Metropolis* (Victoria, 1978), pp. 17-41.
- ¹⁶ For the regional transportation role of Captain John Irving's Canadian Pacific Navigation Company, see *Victoria Illustrated*, p. 73; and Careless, "Business Community," pp. 188 and 192-93.
- ¹⁷ Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers*, paper no. 6, part 4, vol. 29 (1896), pp. 536-37.
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- ¹⁹ *Victoria Illustrated*, pp. 54, 56, 72, and 94; *Vancouver Daily World*, Souvenir Edition, April 11, 1891, p. 9; Robert A. J. McDonald, "Business Leaders in Early Vancouver, 1886-1914," Ph.D. Thesis (U.B.C., 1977), chap. 3; and G. W. S. Brooks, "Edgar Crow Baker: An Entrepreneur in Early British Columbia," M.A. Thesis (U.B.C., 1976), pp. 109-111, 185-205, and 246-85.
- ²⁰ *Fourth Census of Canada 1901*, Vol. III, Table XX, p. 326.
- ²¹ E. O. S. Scholfield and R. E. Gosnell, *A History of British Columbia* (together with *Sixty Years of Progress*) (Vancouver and Victoria, 1913), part 2, by R. E. Gosnell, p. 139.
- ²² *Ibid.*, pp. 131 and 138; Martin Robin, *The Rush for Spoils: The Company Province 1871-1933* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 23, 41, and 59-69; Robert E. Cail, *Land, Man, and the Law: The Disposal of Crown Lands in British Columbia, 1871-1913* (Vancouver, 1974), pp. 141-44 and 152-58; and Margaret A. Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History*, 1958, rev. ed. (Toronto, 1971), p. 318.
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- ²⁵ See *Victoria Illustrated*, pp. 78, 81-82, and 85-86; and G. W. Taylor, *Timber: History of the Forest Industry in B.C.* (Vancouver, 1975), pp. 43 and 72-74.
- ²⁶ McDonald, "Business Leaders," chap. 3 and p. 121.
- ²⁷ For the early expansion of shingle manufacturing capacity in Vancouver in response to developing prairie and U.S. markets, see the *World*, June 20, 1896, p. 17.
- ²⁸ Innis, *Settlement and the Mining Frontier*, pp. 274, 277, 283, and 308; Angus, *British Columbia and the United States*, pp. 247-59, 265, 287, and 298; Tripp, "Transportation," pp. 10 and 96-99; Patricia E. Roy, "Railways, Politicians and the Development of the City of Vancouver as a Metropolitan Centre, 1886-1929," M.A. Thesis (University of Toronto, 1963), pp. 34-37; and John Fahey, *Inland Empire: D. C. Corbin and Spokane* (Seattle, 1965), chapters 7-11.
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- ⁴⁰ Roy, "Railways, Politicians," p. 47; and the *News-Advertiser*, May 19, 1897, p. 8; Feb. 11, 1898, p. 8; and July 26, 1899, p. 8.
- ⁴¹ J. Lewis Robinson and Walter Hardwick, *British Columbia: One Hundred Years of Geographical Change* (Vancouver, 1973), p. 25; and McDonald, "Business Leaders," chap. 3.
- ⁴² The population figures cited in this paragraph for sub-regions of British Columbia are drawn from the *Seventh Census of Canada 1931*, Vol. II, Table XII, pp. 103-6.
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- ⁴⁴ Margaret A. Ormsby, "A Study of the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia," M.A. Thesis (U.B.C., 1931), pp. 57, 81-82, and Appendix C, no. 1, p. 176.
- ⁴⁵ Between 1901 and 1913, the quantity of salmon packed in the Fraser River area declined from 80 to 54 percent of the provincial total. See J. N. Cobb, *Pacific Salmon Fisheries*, 4th ed., 1930, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Statistics, Fisheries Document No. 1092, p. 579.
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- ⁴⁷ Homer E. Gregory and Kathleen Barnes, *North Pacific Salmon Fisheries*, American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations (San Francisco, 1939), pp. 84-95; "Foundations First," *Pacific Fisherman* (50th Anniversary Number), Vol. 50 (August 1952), pp. 5-16; Cicely Lyons, *Salmon: Our Heritage: a Story of a Province and an Industry* (Vancouver, 1969), pp. 232 and 300; and Duncan A. Stacey, "Technological Change in the Fraser River Salmon Canning Industry, 1871-1912," M.A. Thesis (U.B.C., 1977).
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- ⁴⁹ J. J. Deutsch, et al., *Economics of Primary Production in British Columbia*, Vol. III, *The Fishing Industry of British Columbia: The Marketing of the Products of the Fishing Industries* (Vancouver, 1959), p. 17.
- ⁵⁰ Coal Production statistics were calculated from British Columbia, *Annual Reports of the Minister of Mines, 1897-1914*, for markets, see Flucke, "A History of Mining in British Columbia," p. 19.
- ⁵¹ British Columbia, *Annual Report of the Minister of Mines, 1902* (Victoria, 1903), p. H17.
- ⁵² For a discussion of the development of the lumber industry in the Kootenays, see Innis, *Settlement and the Mining Frontier*, p. 307; Lawrence, "Markets and Capital," pp. 43-52, and the Vancouver Board of Trade, *Annual Report, 1913-14* (Vancouver, 1914), p. 57.
- ⁵³ W. A. Carrothers, "Forest Industries of British Columbia," in A. R. M. Lower, *The North American Assault on the Canadian Forest* (Toronto, 1938), p. 271.
- ⁵⁴ Canada, Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, *Report*, Book I, *Canada, 1867-1929* (Ottawa, 1940), p. 69. For a discussion of the integrating force of the prairie wheat boom on the national economy, see *ibid.*, pp. 66-79; and W. T. Easterbrook and H. G. J. Aitken, *Canadian Economic History* (Toronto, 1956), pp. 381-440.
- ⁵⁵ Kenneth A. Buckley, *Capital Formation in Canada, 1896-1930, 1955*, rev. ed. (Toronto, 1974), p. 2.
- ⁵⁶ The Canadian Bank of Commerce, *Charter and Annual Reports 1867-1907*, Vol. 2 (Toronto, 1907), p. 457; also see Vol. 2, pp. 387 and 415.
- ⁵⁷ Innis, *Settlement and the Mining Frontier*, p. 282.
- ⁵⁸ Church, "Mining Companies."
- ⁵⁹ Angus, *British Columbia and the United States*, pp. 282 and 291.
- ⁶⁰ In the summer of 1899, Vancouver hosted a number of prominent central Canadian businessmen who had come west to examine the business prospects of the prairies, the mining areas of southeastern B.C., and Vancouver. See the *News-Advertiser*, July 30, 1899, p. 4; August 15, 1899, p. 2; and September 13, 1899, p. 3.
- ⁶¹ Ross, "The Bank of British Columbia," pp. 346-49.
- ⁶² The influx of central Canadian businesses into Vancouver after the mid-1890s is discussed in McDonald, "Business Leaders," chap. 4; for the origins of Vancouver business leaders, see *ibid.*, chap. 8.
- ⁶³ Buckley, *Capital Formation in Canada*, p. 46.
- ⁶⁴ Paul Phillips, *No Power Greater: A Century of Labour in British Columbia* (Vancouver, 1967), p. 48.
- ⁶⁵ Inter-provincial trade figures for this period do not exist. This generalization is based on an examination of the trading patterns of Vancouver merchants and manufacturers before World War I. See McDonald, "Business Leaders," chap. 4.
- ⁶⁶ For the impact of freight rates and the high tariff on British Columbia, see *British Columbia in the Canadian Confederation: A submission presented to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations by the Government of the Province of British Columbia* (Victoria, 1938), part IV; for freight rates, also see A. W. Currie, *Economics of Canadian*

- Transportation (Toronto, 1954), chap. 3; for the difficulties which B.C. faces in developing a secondary manufacturing capacity, see Shearer, "The Economy of British Columbia," p. 36.
- ⁵⁷ *Vancouver Daily Province*, January 11, 1910, p. 24.
- ⁵⁸ Roy, "Railways, Politicians," pp. 153 and 224-26.
- ⁵⁹ North, "Location Theory and Regional Economic Growth," p. 255.
- ⁶⁰ Jacob Viner, *Canada's Balance of International Indebtedness 1900-1913* (Cambridge, Mass., 1924), p. 129.
- ⁶¹ J. J. Deutsch, et al., *Economics of Primary Production*, Vol. II, *The Mineral Industries* (Vancouver, 1959), p. 15; Angus, *British Columbia and the United States*, pp. 257-58 and 287; and Roy, "Railways, Politicians," p. 148. Mineral production figures are from British Columbia, *Report of the Minister of Mines, 1937* (Victoria, 1937), p. A15.
- ⁶² Lawrence, "Markets and Capital," pp. 41-42.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.
- ⁶⁴ Fred W. Field, *Capital Investments in Canada*, 3rd ed. (Montreal, 1914), p. 57.
- ⁶⁵ Paterson, *British Direct Investment*, p. 63; Field, *Capital Investments*, pp. 266 and 272; the *Western Lumberman*, Vol. VIII, No. 6 (June 1911), p. 26; and the *Province*, September 27, 1911, p. 1.
- ⁶⁶ Viner, *Canada's Balance of International Indebtedness*, p. 126; also see Paterson, *British Direct Investment*, p. 26.
- ⁶⁷ Matthew Simon, "New British Investment in Canada, 1865-1914," *Canadian Journal of Economics*, Vol. III (1970), pp. 240-46 and 249.
- ⁶⁸ Paterson, *British Direct Investment*, pp. 44-45, 51, 77, and 106.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 28, 44, 51, and 123.
- ⁷⁰ M. C. Urquhart and K. A. H. Buckley, eds., *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Toronto, 1965), p. 22.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21, and *Sixth Census of Canada, 1921*, Vol. II, Table XXXIV, pp. 238-39.
- ⁷² Economic Council of British Columbia, *Statistics of Industry in British Columbia*, Table T1; and Canada, Parliament, *Sessional Papers*, Tables of Trade and Navigation.
- ⁷³ Canada, Department of Agriculture, *The Statistical Year-Book of Canada For 1900* (Ottawa, 1901), p. 338; and *The Canada Year Book 1905* (Ottawa, 1906), p. 225.
- ⁷⁴ *Fifth Census of Canada 1911*, Vol. VI, Table VI, pp. 286-96 and 360-68.
- ⁷⁵ Deutsch, *The Mineral Industries*, pp. 14-15.
- ⁷⁶ For changes in the capital structure of the forest industry before World War I, see A. C. Flumerfelt, "Forest Industries," in Adam Shortt and Arthur G. Dougherty, *Canada and Its Provinces*, Vol. 22, *The Pacific Province*, part 2 (Toronto, 1914), pp. 509-10.
- ⁷⁷ Reid, "Canning Mergers," pp. 282-302; Ralston, "The 1900 Strike," pp. 170-71; and Henry Doyle, "Report on [the] British Columbia Salmon Industry," December 5, 1901, Henry Doyle Papers, Box 1, Docket 3, 2, Special Collections, U.B.C.
- ⁷⁸ McCann, "Urban Growth in a Staple Economy," p. 33.
- ⁷⁹ *Fifth Census of Canada 1911*, Vol. VI, Table VI.
- ⁸⁰ For McRae's land, sawmill, and salmon canning enterprises in western Canada, see Robert Wm. Aldred, "The Political Career of Major-General A. D. McRae," M.A. Thesis (University of Western Ontario, 1970), pp. 1-19; T. D. Regehr, *The Canadian Northern Railway: Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies* (Toronto, 1976), pp. 227-29; Lawrence, "Markets and Capital," pp. 71-72; *Western Lumberman*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (1909), p. 17; Vol. 7, No. 5 (1910), p. 36; and Vol. 8 (Feb. 1911), p. 27; the *Province*, January 10, 1911; and Lyons, *Salmon: Our Heritage*, pp. 283-85.
- ⁸¹ British Columbia, Attorney-General, Companies Office, Company Registration Files, File 244 (1910), Roll 63, microfilm.

PART TWO

**THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
OF TOWNS**



INTRODUCTION

"The trouble with local histories," wrote one historian, "is that they are wrapped in a cocoon of uniqueness."¹ This section tackles this common problem directly by expanding the field of study from an isolated examination of individual towns to an analysis of a number of themes in the establishment and development of western towns. The five studies that follow provide both a body of basic and original research and a number of generalizations and suggestions for ascertaining the relationships and nature of western towns as a group. Of course, many themes that could be examined are not dealt with here, and examples from British Columbia are notably absent.² Nevertheless, this set of studies represents an important step forward in our attempt to understand western urbanization. For while the study of cities has been progressing, the study of towns has been neglected. It is the goal of this section to encourage further research on the western town and to aid in reaching the goal of a documented composite of the various types of western towns. Once this ambitious goal is reached, historians may well have an entirely new concept of the nature of western expansion—a concept that will stress the key role played by urban centres in the settlement process.³

At least three important themes are examined in this section. In the first two articles, the role played by large companies and the federal government in the town-building process is examined. Several important conclusions are reached and a research strategy is suggested. It is notable that despite considerable effort on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the federal government, townsite promotion in the pre-1900 period met with only limited success. In terms of urban morphology, these powerful agencies added little of distinction to the design of western urban settlements, but in later years the early decisions and policies would have a profound impact on the shape and nature of urban development in these communities. Using these studies as a starting point, other scholars should now carry the story through to the present with a view to determining precisely the lasting impact these policies and decisions had. Also, a categorization of western urban centres might be developed based on the degree of involvement of outside agencies in the town-building process.

The second set of articles in this section provide case studies of

towns where individuals and groups, rather than large private companies or the federal government, attempted to direct and foster the growth of their communities. The studies of Minnedosa and a group of southern Alberta towns provide a useful town perspective to the phenomenon of urban boosterism which, to date, has usually been studied only in the context of cities. Both studies also examine a period when community leaders had unparalleled opportunities to affect the direction and pace of local change. Significantly, neither author claims to have discovered unique events or processes. Indeed, both suggest that the stages and nature of growth examined in their studies could undoubtedly be discovered in other urban centres across the prairies. Thus, while more case studies are still needed before confident generalizations can be made, there is sufficient evidence to pursue research on individual towns with the expectation that we will end up with more than a series of disconnected local histories.

The final paper in this section deals with a third type of community—the resource town. Much has been written about these communities in other regions of Canada but this is one of the first detailed studies of a prairie resource town.⁴ Lethbridge shares many of the characteristics of resource towns, most notably the status of an adjunct to an industrial enterprise and a lack of significant control by local community leaders over the town's development. Also, Lethbridge shares with other resource towns a simplified occupational structure and a standard physical appearance. Lethbridge, however, has a special status among resource towns in that it eventually moves beyond its dependence on a single resource. This transition, which was only just beginning in 1906, needs to be the subject of further study.

NOTES

- ¹ Oliver Knight, "Toward an Understanding of the Western Town," *The Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (January 1973), p. 27.
- ² For a long list of themes see the Knight article. A recent and important study of a British Columbia town is Norman Gidney, "From Coal to Forest Products: The Changing Resource Base of Nanaimo, B.C.," *Urban History Review*, No. 1 78 (June 1978), pp. 18-47.
- ³ This approach has already been suggested. See Gilbert A. Stelter, "The Urban Frontier in Canadian History," in A. R. McCormack and Ian MacPherson, eds., *Cities in the West* (Ottawa, 1975), pp. 269-85.
- ⁴ For a discussion of the resource town in general terms see Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, "Canadian Resource Towns in Historical Perspective," *Plan Canada*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (March 1978), pp. 7-18.

3. THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND PRAIRIE TOWN DEVELOPMENT, 1870-1888*

H. JOHN SELWOOD AND EVELYN BARIL

In 1870 the Hudson's Bay Company surrendered control of Rupert's Land to the Dominion of Canada, giving up its monopoly trading rights in return for a massive grant of land in the territory. Within twenty years or so of the transfer, the Canadian West underwent a dramatic transformation. By 1890 communications had been greatly improved; the southern prairies were traversed by the Canadian Pacific Railway, several shorter lines were in place, and steamboats plied the Saskatchewan River system. Extensive areas had been permanently settled and the previously few widely scattered communities and trading posts had been superseded by a network of urban centres, several of which claimed city status. The Hudson's Bay Company endeavoured to capitalize on these developments by selling off its land holdings. Appreciative of the higher returns to be obtained from the sale of urban land, the Company began to concern itself with the promotion, development and exploitation of townsites in the prairies. This study examines the evolution of Hudson's Bay Company policies and their impact on western urban centres during the period in question.

Many factors influenced the Company's policies. Contemporary theories regarding the location, creation and growth of towns were put into practice. Existing settlement patterns, perceptions of prairie geography, and ideas regarding the functions of towns were integrated. The Company's townsite policies were also modified by changes in the economic climate, political events, actual and proposed improvements to the communications network, the growth of other urban places, and the actions of its rivals. Internally, the Company's policies were influenced by its other activities, the power exerted by shareholders and directors, and by the personalities of its officers. Of particular

*The authors wish to express their thanks to the staff of the Hudson's Bay Archives for their assistance and advice in researching this paper.

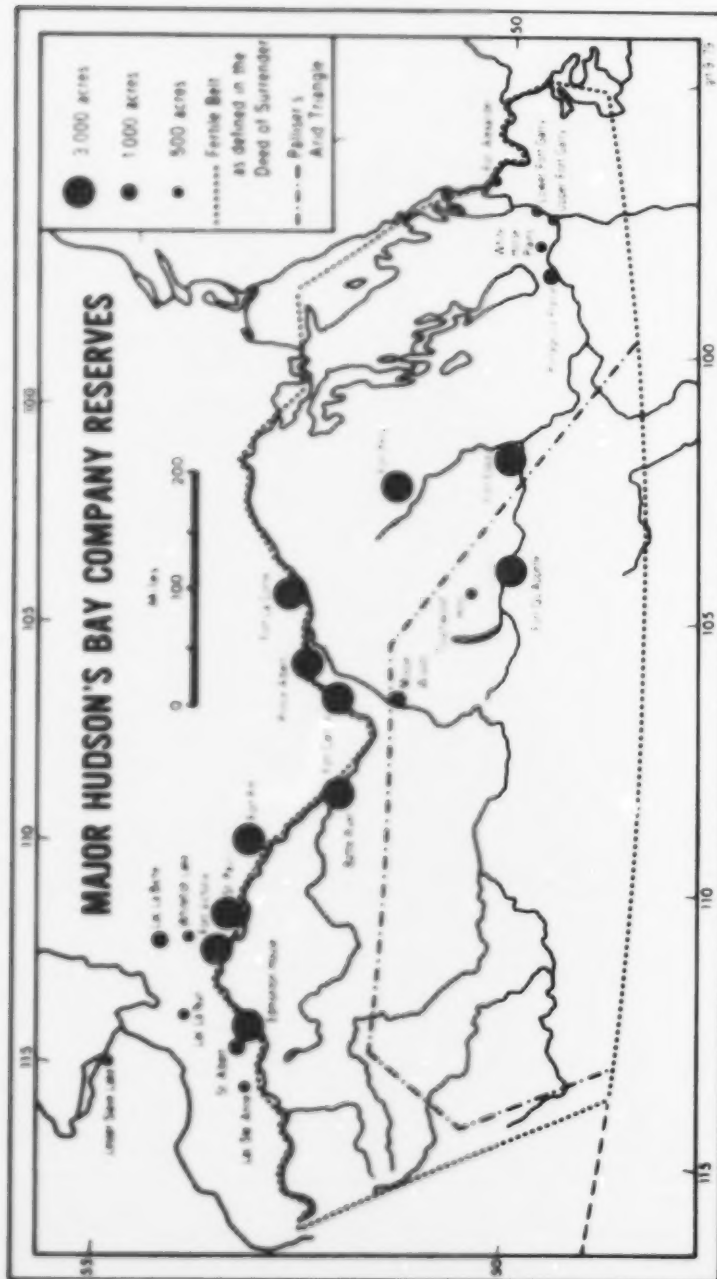
Townsites plans from the HBC Archives are copyright and reproduced by permission of the Governor and Committee of the HBC.

significance to the formulation of Company policy was the advice obtained from its Commissioners in Canada, which reflected the situation in the West. Hudson's Bay Company policies therefore provide some explanations for contemporary western urban landscapes as revealed by those who were immediately responsible during the crucial, formative period of their development.

Although the Hudson's Bay Company had for many years been interested in profiting from land development in Canada,¹ it was not until after Confederation that this became a realistic ambition. For Confederation to work, the Dominion Government had to annex Rupert's Land, the vast western territory over which the Hudson's Bay Company held monopoly trading rights. The Company, controlled by shareholders who perceived the territory as real estate rather than as an area for trade,² turned the negotiations for the transfer to their advantage. Under the terms of what came to be called "the Deed of Surrender" the Company obtained both cash and land in return for the cession of its territory to the Dominion of Canada. The provisions included £300,000 in cash and the right to continue its business, though without monopoly. More important, the Company could lay claim to 50,000 acres of land around its trading posts and one-twentieth of the land in and south of the fertile belt as defined by the explorers Palliser and Hind.³ This included the land bounded by the Canadian-United States border on the south, the North Saskatchewan River on the north, the Rocky Mountains on the west, and Lake Winnipeg, Lake of the Woods and the rivers connecting them on the east (Map 1).⁴

The Company Directors considered the reserves around their posts as particularly valuable. To carry on the fur trade it was necessary to reserve an area around each post for buildings, pasture and farming, and the Governor indicated that this was "the primary object of retaining blocks." He noted, however, that the business absorbed only "a few acres," and pointed out that "these blocks may be of value in case of a settlement being formed about these stations." Company posts were thus regarded as nuclei for future settlement and the size and location of their reserves was given careful consideration.⁵

The selection of these reserves clearly indicated the Company's expectations regarding the future pattern of settlement on the prairies. All the larger reserves were associated with existing settlement and transportation links and were concentrated in the so-called "fertile belt" (Map 1). In the negotiations with the Canadian Government the maximum size of a block around a trading post had been set at 3,000 acres.⁶ Except for Fort Pelly, these were chosen along the North Saskatchewan River and the Carlton Trail—the main transportation route to the west. A concentration occurred around Edmonton where the Company claimed the maximum size reserve at Edmonton House



MAP 1—SOURCE: Compiled from Gooschen to Mackenzie, 18 August 1875, A. B. 13, to 184-188, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

and each of the five tributary posts. In addition, two posts in the Edmonton district had 1,000-acre reserves and five had 500-acre reserves. The fact that the Edmonton district supported the largest population outside the Red River Colony no doubt influenced these selections. Another three 1,000-acre reserves were assigned to posts along the Assiniboine River. In the Red River district, where the Company's claims were limited to 500 acres per reserve, the maximum was assigned to each of Upper and Lower Fort Garry and Whitehorse Plains.⁷ Posts located outside the fertile belt were allocated only enough land for the effective pursuit of their trade function.

With these claims established, the Company's shareholders could look forward to the realization of their objectives. However, events in Canada had made the Board of Directors less sanguine. In fact, Governor Stafford Northcote entertained serious reservations even when, in asking the shareholders to sanction the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada, he stated that the arrangement would be profitable for the Company.⁸ Although committed to doing so, the Canadian Government had done little to build its promised railway or otherwise stimulate settlement of the West. The Riel Rebellion at Red River was another obstacle that had to be overcome. The Board could not expect large profits from land in the immediate future and were persuaded to concentrate on the development of their general trade instead. Shareholders were informed that investments in transportation and trade would indirectly increase land values by encouraging settlement.⁹ Donald A. Smith, who had achieved a measure of respect for his role in the resolution of the Riel Rebellion, appears to have been the originator of this policy.¹⁰

Except for a brief interlude, Smith's ideas were to dominate Hudson's Bay Company land policy for many years to come. Respected by his fellow fur traders, he was appointed by them in 1870 to negotiate their Deed Poll or contract with the Company.¹¹ This resulted in a reorganization of the Company's affairs to ensure separation of the land department from its other operations. In August 1871, the Board appointed Smith as Chief Commissioner to oversee all its affairs in the Canadian Northwest. His responsibilities were the reorganization and management of the fur trade, and the administration of the Company's retail trade and land department. Because land sales were not expected to be brisk, the administration of the land department was not considered a demanding task, and Smith was informed that although he might hire a surveyor to assist him, he should be "careful to make it known that the Company have no intention at present of employing a separate staff for the management and sale of land."¹²

The formulation and administration of land policy was almost

entirely in the Chief Commissioner's hands. The Board, familiar with neither the circumstances of the country nor the selling of lands, trusted Smith's judgement, expressing only the desire that sales be made when the opportunity arose. Terms, prices, and methods of sale were left to Smith's discretion.¹³ Smith's decisions generally became operative at once, the Board being advised by mail long after they had gone into effect.

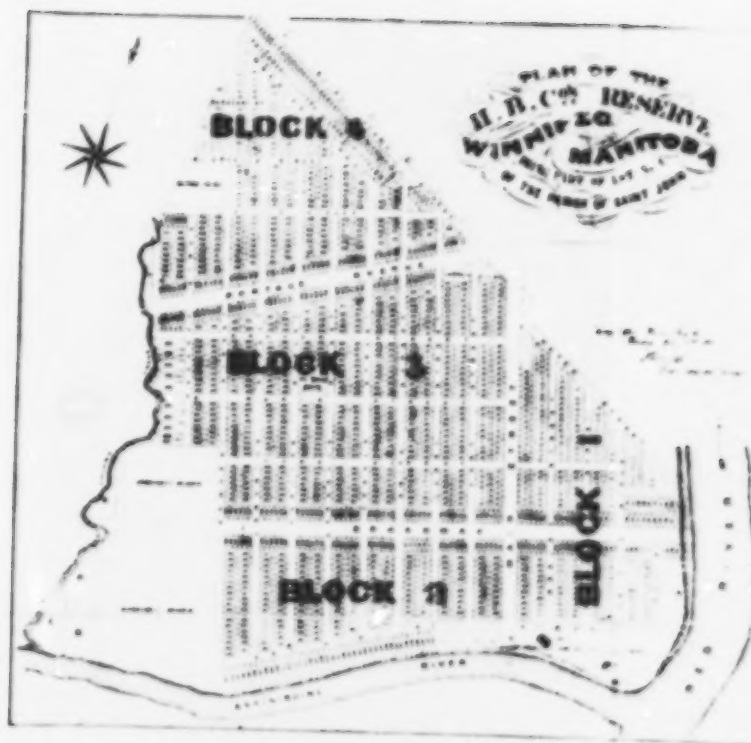
The First Townsites

Although there was a minor boom in Manitoba during the early 1870s, Smith moved slowly in making the Company's lands available for sale. Real and promised improvements to communications with the rest of Canada, glowing reports of the territory's prospects, and the commencement of government surveys all brought a short-lived influx of settlers into the country.¹⁴ Some took up land further along the fertile crescent and the proposed railway route, but most remained in Manitoba. As a result, Winnipeg and other small communities experienced a small but significant increase in their populations. However, Smith did little to react to demand for town land until encouraged to do so by the Dominion Government.

The Secretary of State, Joseph Howe, recommended to Adam George Archibald, Manitoba's Lieutenant-Governor, that he contact the Hudson's Bay Company concerning the survey of its Fort Garry Reserve in Winnipeg to provide land for public purposes. Archibald, in turn, had Colonel John S. Dennis, Surveyor General, draft a partial plan of the Reserve outlining a 100-acre portion to be allocated to the Government. This was presented to the Company. Smith and the Board protested strongly at the resumption of the Company's land, but were persuaded after it was pointed out that the Government's claim was theirs by right and the amount involved was reduced to fifty acres. Archibald's observation that public buildings would enhance the value of the Company's land, the draft plan of subdivision, and perhaps the fear of additional government resumptions, appear to have induced Smith finally to put part of the Reserve on the market.¹⁵

Employing a Winnipeg surveyor, A. H. Vaughan, Smith had plans of subdivision prepared for the Reserve and in the summer of 1872 advertised lots for sale. Vaughan's plans were closely patterned after Dennis's design and based on a simple grid (Map 2). Principal streets were given a substantial two-chain allowance with the remainder one-chain in width. Building lot dimensions were 120 by 50 feet, somewhat larger than proposed by Dennis. They were also bigger than the Winnipeg average, Smith informing the Board that this would lend the Company's land prestige.¹⁶

Eighty-five lots were sold at the first auction of the Reserve



MAP 2 SOURCE: G3 847, Hudson's Bay Company Archives,
Provincial Archives of Manitoba

property, and Smith reported with some satisfaction that the "prices obtained were much beyond the expectations of those ... latterly sold in ... Winnipeg." The sale realized approximately \$72,000. Smith planned another sale shortly thereafter but discovered that the Company as yet had no patent for the land and was not in a position to give deeds to purchasers.¹⁷ The patent was delayed for almost a year and by the time it was received the initial Winnipeg boom was over. Nevertheless, another sale was held in the fall of 1874, despite the expectation that prices would not be so high as realized at the first sale. The second sale was designed to "encourage the erection of buildings and the growth of Winnipeg in the direction of the Company's establishment." It was not a great success, however, and only fifty of the two hundred lots put up for sale were purchased.¹⁸

Even poorer results were experienced in Portage la Prairie, where Smith had claimed land around the Company's post in 1872 when a

settlement appeared assured for the area.¹⁹ In response to growing competition a mile or so to the east, Smith had a townsite plan prepared in the spring of 1873. For some unaccountable reason, Smith appears not to have even considered holding an auction until the fall of the following year. By then, market conditions had worsened and the auction apparently did not take place. It appears that some land was sold in Portage during the early 1870s, but not an amount sufficient to have the townsite plan registered with the Land Title Office.²⁰

Smith seemed to be in no hurry to sell Company lands, although he did try by various means to enhance their value. Thus he was careful not to put too many of the Company's lots at Winnipeg on the market at once, lest prices should drop. The main emphasis in this regard, however, was on encouraging others to build on Company lands. These buildings would attract others to Company lands, and increased value would accrue to the Company. In the terms of sale, Smith tried to encourage immediate and high-quality building by stipulating that buildings should be erected within a year and a half, and that their value should reach a specified sum.²¹ In the second Winnipeg sale, only alternate lots were offered, with the expectation that building on lots bought would enhance the value of those remaining. Smith also encouraged the location of Government buildings on the Company's Reserve, but only if land was sold at the going rate.²²

Smith's only attempt to involve the Company in active promotion of its townsites was made in Portage la Prairie. Competition between two potential townsites led Smith to feel that the building of a hotel on the Company's property would consolidate its position and ensure the growth of the town there. In seeking their approval to build, Smith indicated to the Board that this was a special case. Under the circumstances, the Board concurred and granted Smith permission to finance the venture. Although the Board had made provision for the donation of land to churches and schools, there is no mention of Smith doing so in his correspondence. In fact he gained a reputation for being altogether too parsimonious with the Company's lands.²³

Smith's position was that land given away could no longer bring profit to the Company, whereas land not sold would, in time, inevitably rise in value as access to the Northwest improved. By 1873, therefore, Company policy had become one of conserving its land-holdings until western development increased their worth. By then it was also clear that the Company's earlier assessment of the relative worth of its lands had been reinforced. In the shorter run at least, the reserves were perceived to have much the greater potential for profit. In contrast to the one-twentieth portions of townships evenly distributed throughout the territory, the reserves were in selected locations. Town lot sales had already provided distinctly better returns than had

farmlands, and reserves around the Company's posts were given the best prospects for development as townsites.

It was this difference in expectation regarding the reserves and the one-twentieth which led to the creation of the administrative position of Land Commissioner in 1874. When Chief Commissioner Smith accepted the terms of the Dominion Lands Act in 1872, regularizing the assignment of the one-twentieth as it was surveyed, Governor Northcote was very disturbed. He informed Smith that the Board had wanted a clause inserted in the bill granting the Company the right to refuse to take any land which might become a source of loss rather than profit. The bill was accepted only upon the assurance of the Surveyor-General that in Canada land could be forfeited simply by not paying taxes on it, with no liability to the Company. The incident, however, indicated to the Governor that management of both trade and land departments was overly burdensome for one man, and in June 1874 James A. Grahame was appointed Chief Commissioner, responsible for the fur and general trade, with Smith taking the position of Land Commissioner. The duties of each were carefully outlined to prevent overlapping areas of authority.²⁴

Although the governorship of the Company changed in 1874, the new governor, George G. Goschen, was equally if not more pessimistic about the potential value of the Company's one-twentieth. Thus, Goschen eagerly entered into negotiations with the government of Prime Minister A. Mackenzie which approached the Company in the winter of 1874-5 with the view to buying the Company's lands. The negotiations were never completed, but the terms to which the Company's directors were willing to agree clearly outlined the differences in expectation regarding farmlands and the "town land" around their posts. In exchange for £550,000 in four percent bonds, the Governor and Committee agreed to relinquish all the Company's lands in western Canada, with the exception of certain specified acreages. These would include all its trading establishments, its land in Winnipeg and specified acreages around its posts.²⁵

Neither the changes in the Company's administration nor developments in Canada did much to modify policy until towards the end of the 1870s. Conditions in the Northwest remained in a relatively depressed state, with farm settlers still discouraged by grasshopper plagues and poor transportation. The Dominion Government's trans-continental railway project was proceeding very slowly, and alternative routes brought limited numbers of migrants west. These settled in existing centres and along the fertile crescent where the railway was to be built.²⁶ The Hudson's Bay Company saw its predictions being confirmed.

Despite population increases, Smith held no more auctions of town lots in Winnipeg or Portage, refusing to sell at reduced prices. As a result, development in Winnipeg began to occur away from the Company's property, as this report (dated 1878) indicates: "Instead of the neighbourhood of the Fort and store being covered with dwellings, it lay waste, while dwellings covered the opposite end of Main Street, nearly two miles distant."²⁷ In Portage, settlement at the Company's end of town stopped, and buildings began to cluster around the rival townsite.²⁸

Smith's parsimony with Company town land continued during this period. Thus when the Winnipeg City Council graded a street along Portage Trail in 1875, cutting diagonally across the Company's surveyed plan of the reserve, Smith threatened to go to court. The street meant the cost of a resurvey and the loss of a number of lots. The case was settled out of court, but Smith's threat must have caused public resentment.

It was not long before the Company's bad public relations and their policy of holding out for better prices brought a reaction from the public. In 1878, the provincial government of Manitoba, employing a similar tactic to one used earlier by the City of Winnipeg, levied a differential tax for the maintenance of schools of one cent per acre on lands of residents and five cents per acre on lands of non-residents.²⁹ The Hudson's Bay Company was not named, but it seemed obvious that the tax was aimed at the Company's holdings. On appeal to the Courts of Manitoba, the act was invalidated, but the Company's land sales policies were to take more account of public opinion thereafter.³⁰

By the end of 1878, then, Company land policy was ready for a change. The basic mechanisms of land sales had been established and priorities set, but the Company was beginning to realize that, with the abolition of their monopoly, they could no longer act as independently as previously. With Smith's resignation in early 1879 to pursue more actively his private affairs, and a dramatic turnaround in the economic climate of the West, for a brief period at least, the Company became actively involved in promotion of its lands. Although the change in policy applied to its holdings in general, town lands remained at the core of the Company's activities.

This change was not initiated by the Board. In fact, when Smith resigned it was quite prepared to abolish the post of Land Commissioner and "have a clerk to look after the lands." The Board decided against this when C. J. Brydges, formerly General Superintendent of Government Railways, persuaded Prime Minister John A. Macdonald to recommend him for the post. Brydges, with Macdonald's assistance, had been able to convince the Board that his services could be of

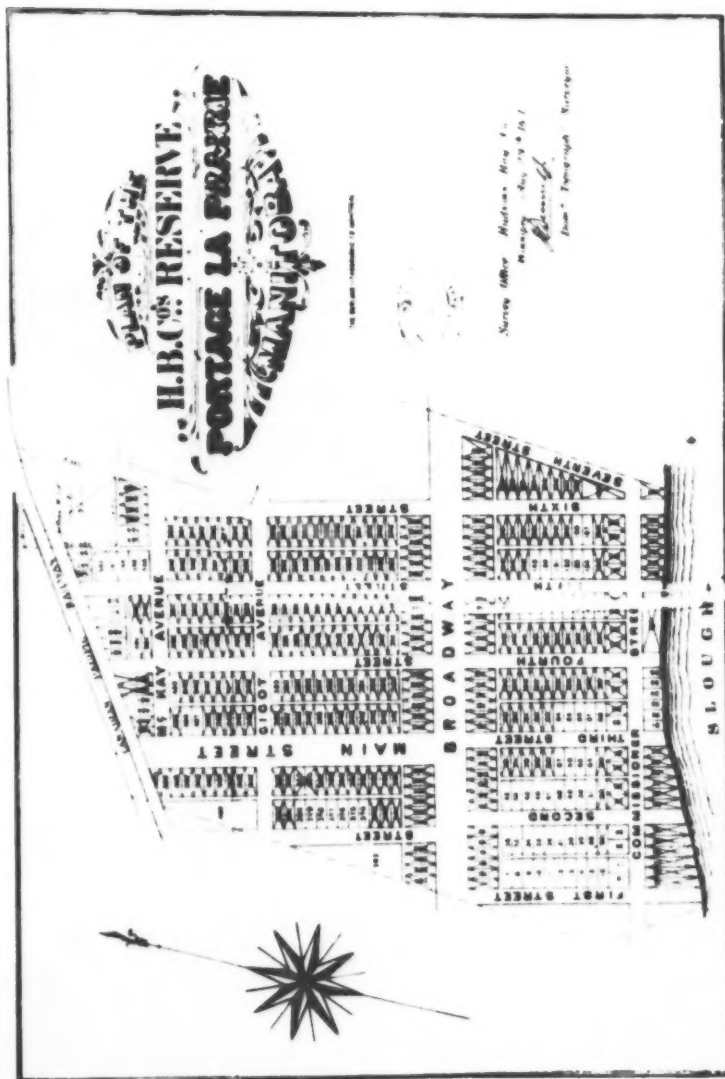
considerable value to the Company and, although "nominally" appointed as Land Commissioner, he was "instructed to master the whole business of the Company."¹¹ Judging by his subsequent actions, Brydges was initially given virtually a free hand to develop land policy as he saw fit.

Expansionary Programmes

In contrast to Smith, Brydges was an indefatigable booster, and immediately after his appointment in March 1879 he began to change the Company's image and to cause major changes to the Land Department and its activities. Taking on new staff, he began a comprehensive inventory of the Company's holdings, had surveys run, developed an expensive advertising campaign, and initiated other programmes designed to promote the Company's lands and to increase their value. Land in the Company's townsites received his early attention.

Brydges travelled to Winnipeg in May 1879 and was dismayed to find that development on the Company's Reserve was "much less prosperous... than the part north of it."¹² Brydges took immediate remedial action. He ordered a new plan of survey laying out lots facing Portage Avenue (Map 2).¹³ Shortly afterwards an article appeared in a Winnipeg newspaper announcing the Company's intention to put its town property on the market, and by June sales advertisements showed up in the papers.¹⁴ Hearing that the Company's townsite at Portage la Prairie was not doing well, Brydges sent his surveyor, J. S. Dennis, out to inspect the place. By September, Dennis had produced a new townsite plan incorporating most of the earlier plan but introducing a broader two-chain street extending northward into the Company's property (Map 3).¹⁵

Tours of inspection also convinced Brydges that the Company could benefit immediately from the establishment of a number of new townsites in localities that had already been settled. Although he recognized that railway access would be important to town growth, this was not his primary concern. Brydges, under the impression that his opinions could sway Government policy, fully expected that the railway would be drawn to centres already in existence. Furthermore, he believed that it would be "a considerable time before villages rise up around [railway] stations." Even if by-passed by railways, centres with a healthy agricultural hinterland would not have their trade diverted away from them. These were serious miscalculations on Brydges' part, but he held to them for the first years of his administration. Accordingly, he had townsites laid out in anticipation of railway service. To Brydges, it was more important that wherever possible the Company gain a head start on any rivals.¹⁶



MAP 3—SOURCE: G3 847, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba

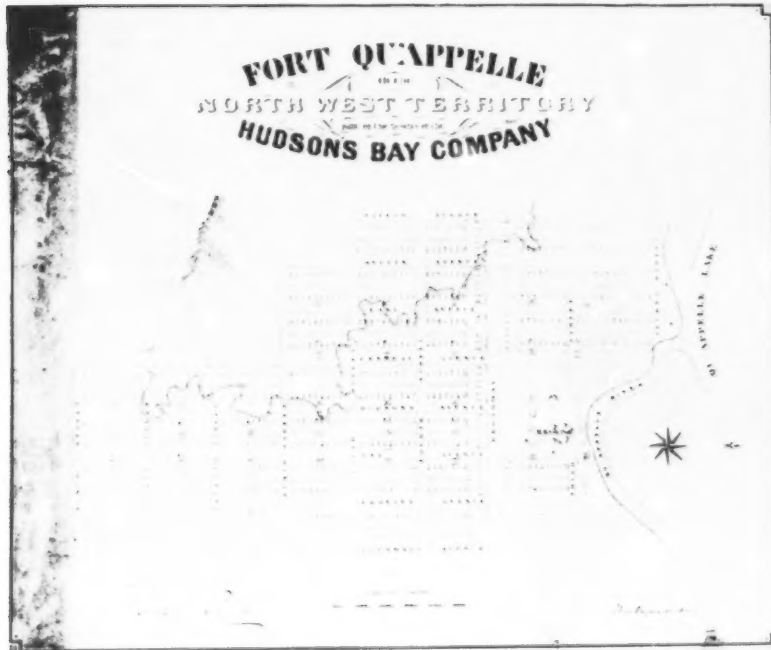
Within two months of his arrival in Winnipeg, Brydges had a townsite laid out across the Red River from Emerson where Smith had some years earlier claimed land for the Company.³⁷ The site was considered desirable because it was an important entry point from the United States, had good country around it, there was a Mennonite settlement scheme nearby and the Company already had a store there. Dennis laid out a simple street grid there containing some four hundred lots.³⁸ Calling the town West Lynne, Brydges complained to the Board that had the plot been surveyed sooner, Emerson would not have been given the start it had.³⁹

Believing still that the transcontinental railway would run through the fertile belt, in September 1879 Brydges had a townsite surveyed around the Company's trading post at Prince Albert. Brydges was so impressed with the quality of the surrounding country and the number of settlers already in the district that he felt the town could well "become the capital of the North West." The survey was once again just a simple grid, but it contained approximately 1,800 lots, an indication of Brydges' confidence in the townsite. Brydges named the new townsite Goschen, honouring the Hudson's Bay Company's Governor while setting it off from nearby competition in Prince Albert.⁴⁰

A year or so went by before any more townsites were laid out, by which time the railway debate had been resolved and the Canadian Pacific Railway route decided upon. Construction of the railway was well under way and migrants were streaming into the West. Caught up in the spirit of the boom, Brydges had lesser townsites laid out around posts at Fort Ellice and in the Riding Mountain district, hoping that they would develop into service centres for their respective hinterlands.⁴¹

Fort Qu'Appelle townsite was laid out in the latter half of 1882 as settlers moved into the area.⁴² The plan for Fort Qu'Appelle (Map 4) was rather more ambitious, making provision for some 730 building lots. It was also slightly more thoughtfully prepared in that two wider streets of the grid focussed on the Company's post. As usual, little consideration was given to the topography of the site. Although the survey was truncated at the foot of the valley escarpment, it nevertheless extended on to the swampy foreshore of Qu'Appelle (Echo) Lake and totally ignored the existence of Echo Creek which meandered through the townsite.

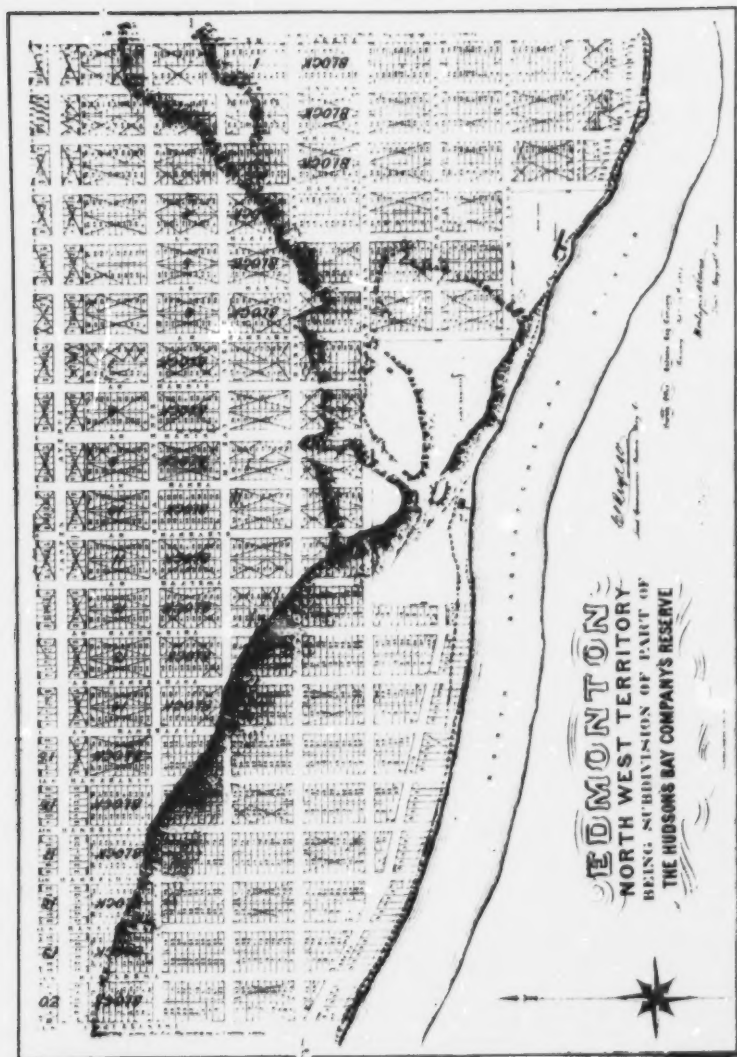
Not one of these towns was located on the railway. Each was positioned where Brydges felt the surrounding country would support a service centre. In circumstances where there appeared to be good prospects for a major urban centre on the railway, however, Brydges did seek benefits for the Company. When it appeared that the railway



MAP 4—SOURCE: Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

would be routed through Calgary, he attempted to obtain the balance of the Company's 50,000-acre grant in that locality.⁴³ Brydges also went along, albeit rather reluctantly, with the Board's instructions that he negotiate the joint development of other townsites with the CPR. As a result, Brydges successfully concluded agreements that would have a townsite located on the CPR main line at Swift Current. A smaller townsite was also agreed upon at Rosenfeld in southern Manitoba. Brydges, however, was not convinced that the Hudson's Bay Company's best interests were served by collaboration with the CPR and preferred to operate independently.⁴⁴

Towards the end of 1881, Brydges had a start made on a survey of Edmonton townsite. By this time the real estate market had become highly speculative and Brydges, informing London that he had sold 400 Edmonton lots within two days of putting them on the market, ordered that the townsite survey be extended. In the second week of April 1882, "tiers of lots covering the whole space" were auctioned off in an atmosphere of speculative frenzy. Brydges estimated that the Company had made sales of between \$250,000 and \$300,000 during the week.⁴⁵



MAP 5—SOURCE: Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

The Edmonton townsite plan, like the others before it, was laid out as a simple rectangular grid (Map 5).⁴⁶ A totally unimaginative plan, it took little account of existing development and less still of topography. Although other townsite plans had been expanded and modified, they gave little evidence of any concern for design. Like most plans of the era, they were produced with the sole objective of making land available for sale as speedily and cheaply as possible. To call them townsite plans is euphemistic; they are plans of subdivision. Brydges was not concerned, however, to produce purely speculative "paper towns." His selection of townsites was based on his appreciation of the factors determining town growth and his assessment of their chances of success—which he sought to improve whenever possible.

Brydges made every effort to ensure that trade facilities and other services formed the nucleus of the Company's townsites. Thus, they were located where facilities were already present or Brydges did his best to introduce them. Recognizing the drawing power of such facilities, he pointed out to the Board that both the Trade and Land Departments stood to gain if Company stores and mills were located in their townsites. Initially the Board accepted the idea enthusiastically and instructed the more conservative Chief Commissioner Grahame to co-operate with Brydges. A grist mill was built at West Lynne and others ordered for Prince Albert, Colville, and Riding Mountain. At Portage la Prairie, where both mill and store were already in existence, a hotel was built to attract immigrants. A saw mill was ordered for Edmonton as well.⁴⁷

Besides erecting service facilities to fix townsite location, Brydges recognized the ability of high quality facilities to attract customers and raise the value of the surrounding land, and he pushed for the modernization of company buildings. In his first letter to the Board upon reaching Winnipeg, Brydges indicated that the facilities for the Land Department and the retail trade were woefully inadequate. The Land Department needed a more spacious office and he felt that it would be beneficial if the "entire rookery" of the old fort were swept away and a proper store erected.⁴⁸ This plan was carried through, Upper Fort Garry was dismantled, and the survey plan was revised to straighten Main Street and create additional lots on the site (Map 2). The Board also supported Brydges in his attempt to modernize retail facilities, and new stores were erected at Winnipeg, Portage, and West Lynne.

Brydges also tried to take advantage of the link between local transportation improvements and increased development and land value, and made every effort to improve the accessibility of Company lands. He lobbied strenuously to have the Government's railway terminate on the Winnipeg Reserve, and, when the project was taken over by the CPR, he tried again to have the Winnipeg terminus placed on the

Company's land. Brydges also created a stock company, heavily subscribed by the Company, to build bridges over the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, to direct commercial and pedestrian traffic through the Winnipeg Reserve. In Portage, he built a steamboat landing and warehouse across from the Company's Reserve to attract some of the river traffic to the Company's store and land there. Brydges also campaigned vigorously to have the Company upgrade its riverboat services on the Saskatchewan.⁴⁹

When the decision to route the CPR further south was made public, Brydges looked into the possibility that the CPR, in co-operation with the Hudson's Bay Company, would extend a branch line to Prince Albert so that the Company's property would not be "left out in the cold." The Board was not prepared to sanction the extension of activities to railroad-building at this point, but neither did they reject the possibility of doing so in the future.⁵⁰ Although the branch line was not constructed, the event showed Brydges' willingness to have the Company sponsor railway construction to its townsites.

Finally, Brydges was prepared to grant or sell land at a nominal price to various businesses, services, religious and educational institutions, and railways to induce them to locate on the Company's land. To Brydges, this action meant that the prices of surrounding land would rise, and that the rise would benefit the Company. The Board, however, was more reluctant. For example, its response to Brydges' recommendation that the Company offer the Government fifteen acres as an inducement to locate the terminus of the transcontinental railway on the Company's land in Winnipeg met with the reply: "I need hardly mention that if 10 acres would be deemed sufficient . . . for securing the terminus on the Company's land it would not be necessary to offer them the larger quantity." The Board seemed more inclined to favour enterprises which brought concrete returns. A gift of land meant the loss of potential revenue from its sale with only a nebulous quality of enhanced value of adjoining lots in return. Nevertheless, Brydges used this tactic to encourage the development of various facilities on Company lands.⁵¹

From June 1879 until mid-1882, acting on the Board's instructions, Brydges sold land when and where there was demand. By the end of this period, the major portion of the reserve at Winnipeg had been sold at steadily increasing prices. The surveyed lots at Portage la Prairie and West Lynne were selling well, Edmonton appeared to be booming, and lot sales in the other townsites, although fetching lower prices, were adding to the Land Department's returns. The shareholders, who did not fully appreciate that a large proportion of the reported sales figures remained to be collected, felt that their investment was paying off. The market value of Company shares more than

doubled between 1880 and 1882. The Board, attributing increased sales largely to the "zeal, energy and tact evinced by Charles J. Brydges," presented the Land Commissioner with an honorarium of £1,500 in appreciation of his services.⁵²

Retrenchment

Brydges had no illusions that the boom was a lasting phenomenon. When the Board suggested in 1881 that Winnipeg sales should be closed and lots held in expectation of higher prices, Brydges protested that prices were more likely to fall than rise, and that, in addition, if lots were not sold development would occur away from Company property. Brydges was aware that during the major part of the boom he was selling largely to speculators who were "discounting the future at a terrible rate," yet he continued to sell. Part of his motive was to "transfer to others the payment of taxes, besides realizing yearly large sums for interest," expecting the majority of contracts to be fulfilled even after prices fell. Even in cases where lots reverted to the Company, he thought they would undoubtedly be resold later at higher prices. The Board approved of Brydges taking advantage of the boom, but apparently expected it to last. Brydges, although pessimistic about its continuation, did not anticipate the seriousness of its eventual collapse.⁵³

Problems resulting from the Company's changed policies were beginning to appear, however. By the beginning of 1882 the Company's trading operations, partly due to Brydges' ambitious town-creation policy, were running into cash flow difficulties. The Board also found the amount of capital invested in new enterprises disturbing. When Brydges suggested additional buildings in early 1882, the Governor informed him that his policy of expansion could no longer be continued. As a result, Governor Colvile, replying to the Land Commissioner's suggestion that additional buildings be erected at various places, informed Brydges: "This is more a Fur Trade matter, than connected with your Department."⁵⁴ The Board realized that some expansion was necessary in the face of increasing settlement, but from now on the more cautious Grahame was to be responsible. From here on, Brydges' authority was to be progressively undermined as the market for land turned increasingly sour.

The real estate boom collapsed suddenly in the middle of April 1882—stopped by the spring flooding of the Red River. The flood disrupted railway services to the south, preventing any new immigrants from reaching the city; normal business activity was seriously affected, and exaggerated reports of the flood intensified anxiety. At the same time, eastern banks began sending instructions to their Winnipeg branches to tighten credit. Merchants who depended on retail sales to

pay back loans began to pressure their debtors, who, in turn, could not get the necessary loans from the bank.⁵⁵ Only Prince Albert showed some life, with sales strong there in the last half of the year.⁵⁶ The economic climate had changed and conditions would continue to worsen.

For Brydges they were particularly bad because in mid-1882 word reached London of alleged major irregularities in his department. In August and September 1882 the Company's affairs in Canada were investigated by a three-man team: William Armit, the Secretary; Sir John Rose, the Deputy Governor; and Sandford Fleming, a Canadian member of the Board. The reports were found to have substance. A number of Company officials, including Chief Commissioner Grahame, had profited from speculative sales of Company town lots.⁵⁷ These purchases, made in direct opposition to Company policy, indicated to the Board that land sales had not been supervised closely enough. In addition, there were claims that Company land, especially sections near the railway line, had been sold too cheaply. Fleming also found that "a limited number of persons" privy to information about the exact location of the CPR had bought all Company sections contiguous to the line. The general public had had no chance to buy these lands and were resentful.⁵⁸

Fleming and Armit decided that changes in policy were needed to deal with the situation. Expecting that high prices would return and that immigration would swell the size of towns, Armit and Fleming determined that in order for the Company to obtain "some benefit from the formation of towns along the line of railway," Company land within five miles of the tracks (on either side) would be reserved from sale until townsites were determined. In order to prevent future speculation by Company employees and purchases by a syndicate, Fleming recommended that auction sales be the main method of selling town land, the sales being held as often as required. At these sales the Land Commissioner would establish an opening price and sell for the highest price above that.⁵⁹ Private sales would only be made after the land had been offered publicly, and single lots would be sold at prices equal to those obtained for similar lots at the previous auction.

Brydges was not implicated in speculative buying, but the reports of Fleming and Armit indicated that he had "erred on the side of prodigality." To the Board this meant that closer supervision of the Company's commissioners was called for. Armit also took the opportunity of being in Winnipeg to inform Brydges that the Board wished advertising costs to be drastically reduced.⁶⁰ Brydges immediately protested against two of the changes—the stipulation that land sales be made only by auction, and the embargo. He pointed out that immigrants would not likely wait for Company auctions to purchase land,

but would probably buy land from the CPR or other land companies, as these would continue to sell privately.⁶¹

In protesting the embargo Brydges made a remarkably accurate assessment of the rapidity of settlement which could be expected, the geographical pattern of future urban centres on the prairies, and the urban functions which would develop in these cities. Agricultural settlement would continue slowly, he felt, and it would be a long time before the villages it supported would expand to give value to the Company's sections:

I have no doubt whatever [he wrote] that all the theories that have been broached, about Winnipeg being superseded by some new places west on the line of the C.P.R., are absurd in the extreme. Portage la Prairie and Brandon will be respectable country towns growing with the settlement of the country around them, but they will both be dependent on Winnipeg and help its growth. Regina ... will have a certain size, but it will be small. No town on this continent has ever grown to large proportions that has not a good farming country to the west as well as round it. Regina lacks this important element, and Moose Jaw for this reason, would be worse. ... The notion that large sums of money are to be made by intermediate sites for villages at stations along the railway, at points intermediate between the centres, is in my judgement absurd. Anyone looking at the results of the small villages on the prairies, along the open lines of railway in Minnesota, Dakota & other States, must see how absurd this is. ... The experience in our country will be the same. ... Calgary may possibly become an important town as the last point before crossing the mountains, and as the centre of a good grazing country, with some fair agricultural land tributary to it.⁶²

Brydges realized that the lack of cheap raw materials and labour, in combination with high transportation costs, militated against the development of prairie cities as major manufacturing centres. Prairie cities, he said, would be service centres rather than manufacturing centres as many believed, and their growth would be "simply conditional on the increased quantity of land which comes into cultivation and which is fairly tributary to the place."

It is idle to expect [he continues] that manufactures will arise at any of these places. Labor is far too dear and scarce. ... It would be better and cheaper for sometime to come to import other things from a distance, where they are manufactured in large quantities and where material and labor is cheaper than it is here.⁶³

The Board considered his arguments and in early December outlined for the Commissioner the new directions Company policy should take. The embargo was lifted and Brydges instructed to "meet the demand freely as it arises but without unduly depressing the market values." Private sales were permitted, but public auctions were to occur whenever possible. In the future, however, Land Department policy

would be placed under much closer supervision. Brydges was instructed to report on all lands which could possibly be expected to rise in value, including land contiguous to the railway line which might become townsites. These lands were no longer to be freely sold as farmlands since, in the view of the Board, any land near the railway as well as land around its trading posts now represented potential town land. To take advantage of the railway's town-creating ability the Board encouraged Brydges to confer with CPR officials concerning the placement of station sites on Company land.⁶⁴ Finally, the Board advised Brydges that Sandford Fleming was to act as the Company's resident advisor in Canada.

In the meantime, conditions had not improved in western Canada, and the Board began looking for ways to reduce expenditures. Saddled with an expanded Land Department, numerous townsites, stores and mills, and much reduced revenues, the Board emphasized the need for stringent financial control. Brydges had already been instructed to cut back on advertising expenses, and early in 1883 he was told that the Land Department's other expenses should be reduced. The Board felt that the miscellaneous account was far too large for proper business procedures and should be almost totally done away with. In July, the Board pointed out that, despite the decreasing returns from the Land Department, expenses had continued to grow, and it suggested that staff and salaries be reduced. However, Brydges, reporting that "there is a general feeling that things have got to their worst," introduced an intensive, short-term advertising campaign to increase sales. This action distressed the Board, whose members very much doubted the wisdom of the decision. They were also disturbed that Brydges continued to donate land for promotional purposes without receiving prior approval.⁶⁵ Having had an enormous amount of freedom between 1879 and 1882, Brydges was obviously reluctant to relinquish his authority. The Board's demands for comprehensive record-keeping and reports also made it very difficult for him to cut back on operating expenses. As a result, the Land Department was looked upon with increasing disfavour by the Company's stockholders.

It seemed for a time that the Board might find a way out of its difficulties when it was approached by George Stephen of the CPR Syndicate with a colonization scheme. With the collapse of the boom, the CPR and its subsidiary, the North West Land Company, were in as much trouble as the Hudson's Bay Company.⁶⁶ Land sold during the boom had been largely taken up by speculators, and the CPR and the North West Land Company were anxious to attract settlers to the prairies. In March 1883, the Board was presented with a plan for an arrangement among the three companies proposing joint management

of their lands in conjunction with an extensive settlement and colonization scheme. For a variety of reasons, however, the plan was not followed through, and the three continued to administer their land separately, with the result that Brydges' administration again came under fire.⁶⁷

Matters came to a head in November of 1883 when a comprehensive status report prepared by Brydges was presented at a meeting of the Board and stockholders. Although sanguine about longer term prospects, Brydges had to admit that the current situation was not good. While he predicted that the Fort Garry Reserve would ultimately realize some four million dollars in sales, there was presently more than a million dollars outstanding on the account. Part of the reserve was unsalable because people still recalled its being inundated during the previous year's flood. Of Edmonton he noted:

There is no railway projected at present . . . and until that is done the sale of lots will not amount to anything. There is no doubt a very good country round Edmonton, but it is so far from any line of railway, and so distant from any market, that it will be some considerable time before any activity can arise at that point.⁶⁸

Prospects at Elphinstone and Colvile were considered to be poor—unless they were to be served by railway lines. Brydges saw a brighter future for West Lynne, Fort Qu'Appelle and Prince Albert because rail lines were projected to reach them, but he warned that growth at Portage la Prairie would be gradual even though it would soon be served by another railway. Again, predicting that within ten years revenues from town property would "ultimately yield sufficient cash to pay off the entire existing capital," Brydges had to inform the Board that a great many sales occurring during the boom would be uncollectable. Nevertheless, until the situation improved, the Land Department's expenses would be recovered from interest on outstanding accounts.⁶⁹ These conclusions led a group of the stockholders to open revolt.

Donald Smith delivered another stinging indictment of Brydges' administration which, together with his major stockholdings, led to his taking over effective control of the Company's affairs. Expressing "want of confidence with regard to the local management generally, both in the commercial and in the land departments," Smith concentrated his attack on the latter. After reminding shareholders of previous criticisms of the Land Department's activities, he went on to claim that land sales by the Canadian Pacific had been very significantly better. Furthermore, he believed the Company's "town lots along the line of the Canadian Pacific Company ought to have been . . . equal to many hundreds and thousands of dollars more than would ever be received from them." Although Sir John Rose came to the

defence of Brydges, and stockholders voted approval of the report, many of them left the meeting before it had been officially adjourned, at which point Smith proposed a rival list of names for the Committee to that put forward by the Governor. Of fourteen persons voting, all but Smith supported the Governor, but Smith's majority holdings carried the vote.⁷⁰

Given the facts, Smith's allegations lack some credibility, and it is difficult to appreciate what motivated his attack. There was certainly some substance to the claims of irregularities in management of the Land Department. Brydges' sales policy, however, had had the full support and encouragement of the Board and he had given them fair warning of the likelihood of the boom's collapse. He had also made several overtures to the CPR in an effort to have stations placed on Hudson's Bay Company land. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the CPR had not to that point located any of their stations on the Company's land and would not actually do so for several more years. The CPR had not run its lines through the fertile belt in the vicinity of the Company's major reserves, and their lines across the prairies traversed only a very few of the Company's sections.⁷¹ Where they did so at Swift Current and Rosenfeld, Brydges had already agreed to major land concessions in return for station locations. The station at Swift Current was eventually placed on an adjoining property—as in Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie—and the station at Rosenfeld was not built until the 1890s.⁷² Rosenfeld townsite was very small, yielding fewer than forty lots to the Company, and by no means generating the magnificent returns implied by Smith. Smith appears to have badly misled the Company's stockholders.

Had he had their interests first in his mind, Smith, as a principal in the Canadian Pacific Syndicate, could presumably have used his influence and done more to bring townsite locations on to Hudson's Bay Company lands. Others have pointed out the Syndicate's desperate shortage of money and the obvious advantages to be derived from placing townsites on their own or other property whose owners were more disposed towards giving bonuses than was the Hudson's Bay Company.⁷³ In giving the Syndicate's lands first priority, while limiting the Hudson's Bay Company's capacity to compete until such time as the Canadian Pacific Railway's financial difficulties were resolved, Smith would be maximizing his personal interests even though revenues to the Hudson's Bay Company were deferred.

Soon after Smith's election to the Committee, it passed resolutions allowing him and Fleming to re-investigate the Company's Land and Trade Departments. On May 1, 1884, they were officially designated a Canadian Sub-Committee for the purpose of overseeing operations in these departments. Brydges was instructed to maintain close

communication with the Sub-Committee.⁷⁴ In future, the Board would rely on the Sub-Committee for policy initiatives. With Smith firmly in control of the Board and Canadian Sub-Committee, virtually every initiative taken by Brydges came under attack, his recommendations were almost always ignored, and he was required to obtain prior approval for even the most picayune expenditure of funds.

Smith was less concerned than previous Board members for immediate revenue from land sales, prophesying expansion of the western economy in the future and expecting the Hudson's Bay Company to be a beneficiary of this expansion. In the meantime, expenses were to be kept to a minimum. Brydges was urged to cut staff and salaries. Another area of concern to the Board was Brydges' efforts to collect arrears on land sales accounts. In cases where Brydges judged defaulters able to pay, he did not hesitate to bring suit against them. The Board ruled against this, since it brought "the Company's name into public notice" and was also very expensive.⁷⁵

Displeasure with the Land Commissioner stemmed from yet another cause—his continued granting of Company lands to various institutions as gifts or for nominal sums. Reminders were of no avail, apparently, and only after a letter from Governor Colvile himself, in 1886, did Brydges promise to obtain permission before granting land. Brydges also had to contend with similar policies applied to the Trade Department. When the Company's official at Calgary recommended the erection of two warehouses, he received a reply indicating that any expansion was to be approached with caution.⁷⁶ The result was that no stores or other facilities were erected to benefit Company townsites after 1883, and sales shops were built in other centres only when they had become established.

Given the generally poor economic conditions and the Company's policy of retrenchment, sales in its townsites were almost non-existent for the first few years after 1883. Late in 1886, sales began to pick up again, but slowly, and at reduced prices compared to those obtained during the boom.⁷⁷ Sales at Fort Qu'Appelle were the most consistent. The area around the town seems to have been the only choice site in the vicinity. Expectations of a branch line through Fort Qu'Appelle to Prince Albert kept settlers in the area, and little defaulting in town lots took place.⁷⁸

Payments in other Company townsites reflected their position relative to the CPR main line and their economic conditions. Winnipeg's dominant position ensured its eventual growth and most purchasers there fulfilled their contracts. Lots which reverted to the Company seemed to be those which had flooded in 1882 and those which were far from the business section of the city. Sales in Winnipeg

began to revive in early 1887. Prices were lower than those paid during the boom, however. Brydges writes of lots "falling out of the hands of those who have been holding on in a spirit of desperation, and getting into those who are buying at low prices." In Portage la Prairie, the Company's Reserve fared badly even though the town was on the main line. Most of the lots had evidently been purchased by speculators who later defaulted on their payments.⁷⁹

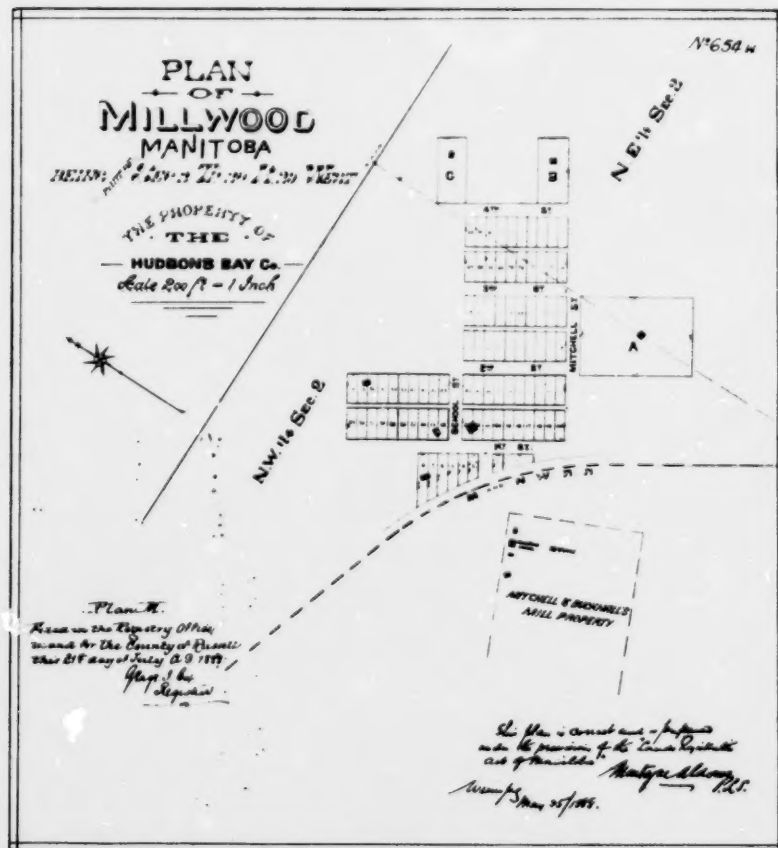
West Lynne also failed to measure up to expectations. Although defaults were few, probably because sales started considerably before the height of the boom when prices were still low, most of the town's population left after the 1882 flood.⁸⁰ The establishment of Gretna further to the east took the Mennonite trade from the Company's store at West Lynne, and the town stagnated. In 1887 Brydges indicated that a number of purchasers in arrears at West Lynne could not be found, and expressed his opinion that there would be no change at that place unless a railway branch line was routed there. No further sales took place there, and the extension surveyed in 1882, as well as part of the original plan, were cancelled and sold as farm lands. Colville and Elphinstone shared West Lynne's fate. Settlement was sparse around both places. The surrounding land was not very suitable for agriculture and the hoped-for railway was built too far away. With no improvement in the situation of either townsite by 1887, Brydges announced his intention to cancel the town plans and turn the lands back into farms.⁸¹

No action had been taken to lay out lots at Rosenfeld, and at Swift Current, the other townsite agreed to between Brydges and the Canadian Pacific, the railway company had obtained the patent to the section just to the east of the Hudson's Bay Company property and laid out an independent townsite.⁸² Brydges, however, was able to report some sales at two new townsites he had established at Newdale and Millwood on the Manitoba and North-Western railway line (formerly the Portage and Westbourne).

Newdale had been surveyed in 1885, after Brydges had reached an arrangement with the M&NW similar to that reached earlier with the CPR. The railway company established its station on the Hudson's Bay Company's section in return for a grant for station grounds and half of the townsite's lots. The townsite plan appears to have been prepared by railway surveyors since it contains features distinguishing it from previous Hudson's Bay Company plans (Map 6). First, the orientation of the streets was determined by the direction of the railway line rather than by the compass points. Second, the plan contained a market square, and third, the townsite was small, encompassing only about 32 acres of land. The street layout was also atypical in that it divided the building lots into more compact, squarer blocks. Brydges, in informing the Board of the agreement he had reached with the

railway company, indicated that he expected to make similar arrangements as the line was extended.⁸³

The Board was not impressed. Brydges was taken to task for yet again making free grants of land without obtaining prior approval. While agreeing with the principle of such collaboration with railway companies, the Board insisted that in future Brydges first obtain permission from the Canadian Sub-Committee or the Board before finalizing any like agreements. The Board took this position despite Brydges' pointing out the railway companies' policy of leaving station-location decisions until the last possible moment and warning that if not given "discretion to apply the principle... I shall of course not entertain any future applications, which must be dealt with at once or not at all."⁸⁴



MAP 7—SOURCE: Plan No. 654W, Land Titles Office, Winnipeg.

It seems that Brydges maintained this position, since the last townsite he established, although on the Manitoba and North-Western line, was laid out in 1888 independently of the railway company. Millwood townsite was located at the railway's crossing of the Assiniboine River. Only a small subdivision containing some one hundred lots (Map 7), the survey was superimposed over a scattered settlement focussed on a hotel and mill. Brydges evidently hoped that these would help promote sales. However, there were few lots sold in the townsite. Millwood could not compete with nearby Binscarth, where the railway had received a bonus to place its station.⁸⁵

It was his desire to lure railway stations to Company lands that finally brought about the downfall of Brydges. During 1888 he attempted to obtain the Board's permission to grant land on the Company's Reserve to the Red River Railroad for its Winnipeg terminus. Finally, when Brydges protested that the Board's refusal would mean a heavy loss to the Company, he was authorized to grant ten acres, but no more. When the railroad was sold to the Northern Pacific Railway, Brydges complied with these instructions but sold Northern Pacific an additional ten acres of flood-prone, otherwise "unsaleable" land for \$10,000. Interpreting Brydges' actions differently and incensed at the meagre price obtained for the land, the Board sent him a plainly-worded telegram: "Board dissatisfied—what you have done is in direct opposition to instructions." Refusing to recognize the agreement between Brydges and the Northern Pacific, the Board attempted to have the transaction halted. The terminus remained, fulfilling Brydges' long held objective, but the Board's patience with its Land Commissioner had expired. In December the Board decided that his services were no longer needed.⁸⁶

The decision to dismiss Brydges appears to be a clear indication of the Company's rejection of his approach to land development. Boosterism was incompatible with the more conservative policies advocated by Smith. Brydges' high profile, his expensive promotions of the Company's lands, his giveaways and other attempts to meet the competition, all contributed to his fall from favour. Brydges apparently died before learning of the decision to fire him, and the position of Land Commissioner died with him.⁸⁷ Some might interpret this as a change in Company land policy, but such an interpretation is not warranted. What did change was the Company's attitude towards the position and the man who had held it. Under certain circumstances Smith and the Board appeared happy enough to go along with Brydges' proposals, but they were tired of his assuming responsibilities and taking initiatives beyond the level that they were disposed to give him.

Brydges had been hired in circumstances entirely different from

those prevailing in the late 1880s. He had originally been given his broad mandate because of his potential influence with the Government, which at the time was expected to build the transcontinental railway. When the CPR Syndicate took over the project, it soon became apparent that Brydges was no longer so useful. In fact, Brydges' animosity towards Smith and the Syndicate made him something of a liability.⁸⁸ Smith's assumption of power in the Hudson's Bay Company drew it and the Syndicate together and their development policies had to be reconciled to Smith's satisfaction. Brydges could never adjust to this arrangement.

Conclusion

After Confederation, the Hudson's Bay Company became a major landowner in the Canadian West. The Company's principal objective through the next two decades was to maximize profits from the sale of its holdings. Townsite lands were perceived to have the greatest potential returns. It was within this framework that land policies evolved. These were largely determined by two officers of the Company: Donald Smith and Charles Brydges. Smith, as Chief Commissioner and then Land Commissioner, was responsible for the Company's first tentative steps to establish and develop townsites. On his resignation his successor, Charles Brydges, launched into an ambitious campaign to establish and promote new townsites. However, when Smith voted himself into power and became the Company's chief representative in Canada, Brydges' boosterism was curtailed.

Company policy under Smith's influence was generally a matter of allowing others to assume the costs of development and promotion while the Company itself passively observed the increase in value of its lands. Smith often appeared loath to invest the Company's capital in enterprises designed to stimulate demand for townsite land. He was also reluctant to give away Company lands either to promote development or to improve the Company's image. He also appeared to have little concern for the competition, apparently convinced that the locational advantages of the Company's lands guaranteed a considerable rise in their value within a relatively short period of time. Nevertheless, Smith did, on occasion, find cause to use the promotional techniques so enthusiastically employed by Brydges. The main difference was that Smith was more conservative in his approach—except where he himself or the CPR stood to benefit most from Hudson's Bay Company largesse. Contrary to Bellan's contention⁸⁹ Smith does not appear to have used his position in the Syndicate to bring railway facilities to the Company's lands unless there was no better alternative.

Brydges apparently did not have similar divided loyalties.⁹⁰ His

tasks were simply to maintain the Company's image and to obtain good prices for its lands. To do this, he had to rely more exclusively on the Company's resources, his tenuous influence with the Government, and his personal assessment of the land market. Brydges also assumed office at the onset of a speculative boom that gripped the West and greatly increased the amount of competition the Company had to face. The policies of Brydges were easy to criticize, but to sell land he had to meet the competition. In retrospect, Brydges' assessment of the market potential of the Company's properties appears more accurate than that of his superiors. He also had a better appreciation of the factors critical to town growth. His mistake was to think that he could determine where railway service would be provided. Had Brydges been more effective in persuading others to bring railways to his townsites, the Hudson's Bay Company's impact on western towns would undoubtedly have been greater. As it turned out, Brydges overestimated his capacities, and his townsites were a lot more speculative than he had anticipated. Because of this, the Hudson's Bay Company townsites made little mark on the landscape.

At the end of the 1880s, only Winnipeg townsite could be considered a success. Sales revenues were good and, although the Company had lost a very considerable amount of paper profit as a result of

TABLE I

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF URBAN LAND
SALES AT FEBRUARY 28, 1889

Townsite	Uncancelled Sales		Cancelled Sales	
	Number of Lots	Revenues ^(a) (dollars)	Losses ^(b) (dollars)	Revenues ^(c) (dollars)
Winnipeg	928	845,146	1,249,975	296,691
Portage la Prairie	199	32,387	29,345	11,506
West Lynne	242	23,347	11,605	4,285
Prince Albert	348	13,448	23,300	8,351
Elphinstone	11	220	—	—
Colville	23	2,030	11,442	2,808
Fort Qu'Appelle	152	12,665	970	494
Edmonton	500	23,152	147,860	54,117
Newdale	92	135	—	—
Millwood	11	355	—	—

Notes: a) Principal plus interest payments.

b) Value of initial sales contracts subsequently cancelled with the land reverting to the Company.

c) Forfeited payments and interest on lots reverting to the Company.

SOURCE: James H. Lawson to W. Armit, 5 April 1889, A12/, 34/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 15a-15d.

cancelled sales, the Reserve was quite heavily developed (see Table I). Owing to the cancelled sales, revenues were a far cry from the two million dollars commonly reported for the Company;⁹¹ nevertheless, they exceeded a million and accounted for by far the greater proportion of the Company's total receipts from townsite sales. Elsewhere, demand for the Company's townsites was low because they were in inferior locations relative to those of the competition.

Portage la Prairie was the only townsite to have been located on the CPR main line, but the town's station was not on the Company's land and, as Brydges had foreseen, the community had not grown to major proportions. Revenues from there were significant, but the Company's land was not in the centre of town. Most of the Company's sections elsewhere on the main line had been sold to others. Brydges' efforts to capitalize on Calgary's growth amounted to nothing, and where he had reached agreement with the CPR to place a station on the Company's land at Swift Current, the CPR chose instead to locate the station on its own adjoining property.

Company townsites on other railway lines had fared little better. Rosenfeld would not even be surveyed by the CPR until 1892, and Millwood would not have a station until 1899. Newdale, even with a station, was no more than a small village community. Although there had been no cancellations, sales receipts from the latter communities were minimal. As Brydges had correctly predicted, the great majority of such service centres would achieve only a limited size. Their prospects for generating the revenues forecast for them by Smith were dim indeed.

The Company's other townsites were still essentially the "paper towns" Brydges had been so concerned to avoid, and most were destined to remain almost that way. Colville disappeared altogether, while West Lynne, Elphinstone and Fort Qu'Appelle saw only limited growth as competing centres with railway service proved more attractive.

Edmonton and Prince Albert would eventually become important centres. They did not develop into established communities, however, until the railway reached them. In the meantime, receipts on land sales were overshadowed by heavy losses on cancelled contracts. Riverboat service was inferior, and more southerly communities with railway access were much more favoured by incoming settlers.

The Company's townsite plans added nothing of distinction to the design of western settlements. All those prepared by the Company's surveyors were simple gridiron subdivisions created with the sole purpose of providing a series of lots for quick survey and sale. Apart from river boundaries, topography was completely ignored. Flood

plains and escarpment alike were uniformly marked off into standard parcels. Even pre-existing trails and buildings were often not accommodated. Generally, the plans made no provision for public buildings or community open spaces. When land was required for special uses, sites were merely superimposed on the existing grid. Such procedures were commonplace in the prairies and the Company did nothing to alter the pattern. However, even if more imaginative and superior designs had been employed, it is unlikely that the Company's townsites would have been any more successful.

Although other factors came into play, the success of a townsite during the period was primarily determined by its accessibility. This not only came to mean location on a railway line, but the presence of a station as well. Then, for the townsite to grow, it required a productive hinterland and the establishment of a range of services at the site. Hudson's Bay Company officials were fully aware of these needs, and policies relating to the location and promotion of their townsites were developed accordingly. The Company's indifferent success was initially attributable to its failure to anticipate correctly where the railways would first traverse the West. When this had been established the Company, because of its reluctance to sponsor or bonus railway companies to the same extent as other promoters, missed opportunities to bring both lines and stations on to its properties. In the long run, the Company's prediction that its reserves in the fertile crescent would become important urban centres would prove correct, but it would be some time before railways were attracted to the area.

NOTES

- ¹ G.P.V. Akrigg and Helen B. Akrigg, *British Columbia Chronicle: 1847-1871* (Vancouver: Discovery Press, 1977), pp. 19-22.
- ² E. E. Rich, *The Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870*, 3 vols. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960), 3, pp. 833-38.
- ³ John Warkentin, *The Western Interior of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964), p. 156.
- ⁴ *Order in Council Admitting Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory into the Dominion of Canada*, June 23, 1870, Schedule C.
- ⁵ Hudson's Bay Company, *Proceedings of the General Court of the Hudson's Bay Company* [hereafter cited as *Proceedings*], 24 March 1869, pp. 56-7; 23 November 1869, p. 5; 24 March 1869, p. 57; 7 April 1869, p. 19.
- ⁶ *Proceedings*, 23 November 1869, p. 5.
- ⁷ William Armit, Sec. to D. A. Smith, 17 November 1870, A6/, 44/, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Public Archives of Manitoba [hereafter HBCA-PAM], fo. 97; Adam George Archibald Correspondence, MG1Z, A1, PAM, p. 194.
- ⁸ John S. Gailbraith, "A Note on the Mackenzie Negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company, 1875-1878," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 34 (March 1953), p. 40.
- ⁹ Hudson's Bay Company, *Report of the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company to be laid before the Shareholders* [hereafter cited as *Report*], 28 June 1871, p. 27.
- ¹⁰ William L. Morton, ed., *Manitoba: The Birth of a Province* (Altona: D. W. Friesen and Sons, 1965), p. 78.
- ¹¹ Alan Wilson, "In a Business Way": C. J. Brydges and the Hudson's Bay Company, 1879-89," in Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook, eds., *The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W. L. Morton* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), pp. 114-5.

- ¹² Armit to Smith, 1 August 1871, A6, 44, HBCA PAM, fo. 343-46.
- ¹³ Sir Stafford Northcote, Governor, to Smith, 11 February 1873, A7, 4, HBCA-PAM, fo. 183.
- ¹⁴ James M. Richtik, "Manitoba Settlement: 1870 to 1886," Ph.D. Thesis (University of Minnesota, 1971), pp. 63-5.
- ¹⁵ The first years of the development of the Winnipeg Reserve are examined in detail in John Selwood and Evelyn Baril, "Land Policies of the Hudson's Bay Company at Upper Fort Garry: 1869-1879," *Prairie Forum*, Vol. 2 (November 1977), pp. 101-19.
- ¹⁶ Smith to Armit, 23 May 1873, A12, 14, HBCA PAM, fo. 405.
- ¹⁷ Smith to Armit, 27 July 1872, A12, 14, HBCA-PAM, fo. 187; fo. 187d; and 15 November 1872, fo. 236.
- ¹⁸ Smith to Armit, 15 August 1874, A12, 15, HBCA PAM, fo. 183d; 17 October 1874, fo. 215.
- ¹⁹ Smith to Armit, 17 July 1872, A12, 14, HBCA PAM, fo. 179d. Also Smith to Armit, 17 January 1873, A12, 14, HBCA PAM, fo. 304a, 304ad. The Company did not receive the patent for this land until 1879. See Brydges to Armit, 24 May 1879, A12, 18, HBCA PAM, fo. 18.
- ²⁰ Smith to Armit, 15 August, 1874, A12, 15, HBCA PAM, fo. 184. Plan No. 9 was not registered until March 1879.
- ²¹ See advertisement for auction sale held on 27 July 1872, A12, 14, HBCA PAM, fo. 241d.
- ²² Smith to Armit, 15 August 1874, A12, 15, HBCA PAM, fo. 183; 11 April 1873, 15, fo. 336.
- ²³ Alexander Begg and Walter R. Nursey, *Ten Years in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Times Publishing House, 1879), p. 53.
- ²⁴ Northcote to Smith, 3 December 1872, A7, 4, HBCA PAM, fo. 176-9; Colonel J. S. Dennis to Smith, 3 December 1872, A12, 14, HBCA PAM, fo. 279-279d; Governor George Goschen to Commissioner James A. Grahame, 25 June 1874, A8, 13, HBCA PAM, fo. 197.
- ²⁵ Goschen to Mackenzie, 18 August 1875, A8, 13, HBCA PAM, fo. 182.
- ²⁶ John Langton Tyman, *By Section Township and Range: Studies in Prairie Settlement* (Brandon: Leech Printing Ltd., 1972), pp. 83-4.
- ²⁷ W. Fraser Rae, *Newfoundland to Manitoba* (New York: Putnam, 1881), p. 198.
- ²⁸ Charles J. Brydges to Armit, 17 September 1879, A12, 18, HBCA PAM, fo. 143.
- ²⁹ Smith to Armit, 24 October 1874, A12, 15, HBCA PAM, fo. 229; Manitoba, 42 Victoria, ch. 13.
- ³⁰ John S. Galbraith, "Land Policies of the Hudson's Bay Company: 1870-1913," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 33 (March 1951), p. 6; *Proceedings*, 24 June 1879, pp. 6-7.
- ³¹ Governor Rose to John A. Macdonald, 10 February 1879 (confid.), Macdonald Papers, MG4, B1 4, Vol. 259, PAM; *ibid.*, 13 March 1879.
- ³² Brydges to Armit, 24 May 1879, A12, 18, HBCA PAM, fo. 19d-20.
- ³³ This survey was registered at the Winnipeg Land Titles Office on 28 June 1879, as Plan No. 81. It was replaced by Plan No. 129, registered on 11 July 1881. Plan 81 shows the Upper Fort site and leaves part of the Reserve still unsubdivided.
- ³⁴ Clipping from *Manitoba Free Press*, 31 May 1879, A12, 18, HBCA PAM, fo. 72. See also unidentified newspaper clipping, 9 June 1879, A12, 18, HBCA PAM, fo. 30.
- ³⁵ This new plan (Portage la Prairie Land Titles Office Plan No. 11) cancelled Plan No. 9 and was registered on 16 September 1880. It was in turn superseded by Plan No. 15, registered on 15 January 1881, which extended the survey northward to provide for a railway right-of-way. However, once the railway alignment was fixed, another plan, Plan No. 33, was prepared to accommodate the actual right-of-way. Plan No. 33 was registered on 13 September 1881 and is the one reproduced in Map 3.
- ³⁶ Brydges to Governor Colville, 15 November 1880, A12, 19, HBCA-PAM, fo. 472; Brydges to Armit, 22 January 1880, A12, 19, HBCA-PAM, fo. 54-5; 17 September 1879, fo. 142d.
- ³⁷ Not all of the 50,000 acres of reserve lands was claimed immediately. Smith claimed part of the balance for the post at Pembina in 1874. Smith to Armit, 1 May 1874, A12, 15, HBCA-PAM, fo. 152d.
- ³⁸ West Lynne townsites plan, Plan No. 7, Manchester Division, was registered on 23 July 1879.
- ³⁹ Brydges to Armit, 3 October 1879, A12, 18, HBCA PAM, fo. 169.
- ⁴⁰ Brydges to Armit, 17 September 1879, A12, 18, HBCA PAM, fo. 142. The name Goschen was soon dropped in favour of Prince Albert. *Plan of the Town Plot of Goschen, Prince Albert, N.W.T.*, 1881, HBCA-PAM, G.3/847.
- ⁴¹ These townsites were Elphinstone, on the Little Saskatchewan River, and Colville, the townsites at Fort Ellice. In both cases the surveys consisted of simple rectangular grids.
- ⁴² *Fort Qu'Appelle in the North West Territory, Part of the Reserve of the Hudson's Bay Company*, 1882, HBCA-PAM, Temporary Classification R37. Fort Qu'Appelle had been touted by many as the new capital of the North West Territories but was passed over in favour of Regina. The circumstances surrounding the routing of the CPR line and the selection of Regina as capital are covered in Pierre Berton, *The Last Spike: The Great Railway, 1881-1885* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), pp. 114-17.

- ⁴³ Brydges to Armit, 27 August 1881, A12/, 20/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 250-51; 26 June 1882, 21/, fo. 198; 2 October 1882, fo. 299-300; 12 January 1882, fo. 24. An account of the Company's efforts to acquire land in Calgary is found in Max Foran, "Early Calgary, 1875-1895: The Controversy Surrounding the Townsite Location and the Direction of Town Expansion," in A. R. McCormack and I. Macpherson, eds., *Cities in the West* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1975), pp. 26-45.
- ⁴⁴ Brydges to McTavish (copy), 7 November 1882, A12/, 22/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 245; Brydges to Armit, 19 June 1883, fo. 232; 27 October 1882, 21/, fo. 332.
- ⁴⁵ Brydges to Armit, 10 December 1881, A12/, 20/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 409; 17 April 1882, 21/, fo. 123.
- ⁴⁶ *Edmonton North West Territory being Subdivision of Part of the Hudson's Bay Company's Reserve*, 1881, HBCA-PAM, G. [G.3] 3/847.
- ⁴⁷ Brydges to Armit, 17 September 1879, A12/, 18/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 143, 145d; Armit to Grahame, 12 September 1879, A6/, 52/, fo. 35-40; Grahame to Armit, 5 May 1880, A12/, 48/, fo. 317; 3 December 1879, A12/, 47/, fo. 480; 5 November 1879, fo. 441d; Brydges to Armit, 20 December 1880, A12/, 19/, fo. 504; Grahame to Armit, 3 December 1879, A12/, 47/, fo. 480.
- ⁴⁸ Brydges to Armit, 24 May 1879, A12/, 18/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 21, 21d.
- ⁴⁹ Brydges to Armit, 16 June 1879, A12/, 18/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 47; Brydges to H. L. Langevin, Minister of Railways (copy), 16 August 1880, 19/, fo. 344-49; Brydges to Armit, 8 June 1880, fo. 243-45; Grahame to Armit, 30 April 1880, 48/, fo. 315; Brydges to Grahame (copy), 25 November 1880, 19/, fo. 486-90.
- ⁵⁰ Brydges to Colville, 27 November 1880, A12/, 19/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 482; Armit to Brydges, 22 December 1880, A6/, 52/, fo. 689-90.
- ⁵¹ Armit to Brydges, 9 July 1879, A6/, 51/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 698; Minutes of the Governor and Committee, 15 November 1881, A4/, 46/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 90. See also, 7 January 1882, A7/, 47/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 6d.
- ⁵² Duane C. Tway, "The Influence of the Hudson's Bay Company upon Canada," Ph.D. Thesis (University of California, 1962), p. 184; Minutes of the Governor and Committee, 11 July 1882, A4/, 47/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 25, 25d.
- ⁵³ Brydges to Armit, 20 May 1881, A12/, 20/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 129-30; 27 August 1881, fo. 245-46; 17 December 1881, fo. 416; 6 May 1881, fo. 104; 20 June 1881, fo. 173; 28 October 1880, 19/, fo. 441; 20 May 1881, 20/, fo. 129-30; and Armit to Brydges, 18 January 1882, A6/, 53/, fo. 577.
- ⁵⁴ Colville to Brydges, 6 January 1882, A7/, 51/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 57.
- ⁵⁵ Ruben C. Bellan, "The Development of Winnipeg as a Metropolitan Centre," Ph.D. Thesis (Columbia University, 1956), pp. 57-61.
- ⁵⁶ Gary W. D. Abrams, *Prince Albert: The First Century: 1866-1966* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1966), p. 37.
- ⁵⁷ Sandford Fleming, *Observations of Mr. Sandford Fleming on the General Land Policy of the Hudson's Bay Company* (confidential) (London: Sir J. Causton and Sons Ltd., 1882), p. 2; Assistant Secretary to Armit, 10 August 1882, A6/, 54/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 194; and W. Armit, *Report by the Secretary on Matters Relating to the Company's Landed Property* (confidential) (London: Sir J. Causton and Sons Ltd., 1882), p. 2.
- ⁵⁸ Fleming, *Observations*, p. 2.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 7-8.
- ⁶⁰ Galbraith, "Land Policies," p. 9; Armit, *Report by the Secretary*, p. 8.
- ⁶¹ Brydges to Armit, 2 October 1882, A12/, 21/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 296-7.
- ⁶² Brydges to Armit, 28 September 1882, A12/, 21/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 291-93.
- ⁶³ Brydges to Armit, 9 May 1883, A12/, 22/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 163-65.
- ⁶⁴ Armit to Brydges, 12 December 1882, A6/, 54/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 314-15.
- ⁶⁵ Armit to Brydges, 16 October 1883, A6/, 55/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 29.
- ⁶⁶ James E. Hedges, *Building the Canadian West: The Land and Colonization Policies of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (New York: Macmillan, 1939), pp. 74-90.
- ⁶⁷ Memorandum, 10 March 1883, A72/, 5/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 4-7; *Report*, 26 June 1883; Colville to George Stephen, 5 June 1883, A7/, 5/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 96.
- ⁶⁸ Brydges to Armit, 2 October 1882, A12/, 21/, HBCA-PAM, fo. 296-97.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 405-10, 412, 433.
- ⁷⁰ *Proceedings*, 22 November 1883, pp. 9-14.
- ⁷¹ See maps of the territory showing Hudson's Bay Company lands and railway lines; for example: *Map of Part of Manitoba and Northwest Territories—Showing Colored in Red—Lands for Sale by Hudson's Bay Company*, 1899, G.3/844, HBCA-PAM.
- ⁷² Don C. McGowan, *Grassland Settlers: The Swift Current Region During the Era of the Ranching Frontier* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1975), p. 19; Clarence Chipman to Armit, 26 August 1892, A12/L, Misc/82, HBCA-PAM, fo. 1.
- ⁷³ See, for example, Frank Gilbert Roe, "An Unsolved Problem of Canadian History," Canadian Historical Association, *Annual Report 1936*, pp. 70-77; and Berton, *The Last Spike*, p. 120.

- ⁷⁴ Minutes of the Governor and Committee, 22 January 1884, A4, 47, HBCA PAM, fo. 59d 63d; *ibid.*, May 1884, fo. 70-71; Armit to Brydges, 6 May 1884, A6, 55, fo. 302-3.
- ⁷⁵ Galbraith, "Land Policies," pp. 15-16; Armit to Brydges, 10 June 1883, A6, 54, HBCA PAM, fo. 645-46; Brydges to Armit, 14 March 1884, A12, 23, fo. 59-60; Smith to Armit, 3 July 1885, A12, 53, fo. 176-77.
- ⁷⁶ Armit to Brydges, 8 October 1884, A6, 55, HBCA PAM, fo. 551; Brydges to Colville, 25 June 1886, A12, 25, fo. 144; Grahame to Colville, 25 June 1884, A12, 52, fo. 195.
- ⁷⁷ Brydges' letters frequently mention sales at Winnipeg, Edmonton and Qu'Appelle, but other townsites are seldom referred to. Brydges to Armit, A12, 26, HBCA PAM, fo. 104-519, *passim*.
- ⁷⁸ Brydges to Armit, 17 March 1883, A12, 22, HBCA PAM, fo. 104; James H. Lawson to Armit, 5 April 1889, A12, 34, fo. 15ad.
- ⁷⁹ Brydges to Armit, 16 October 1883, A12, 22, HBCA PAM, fo. 401; 2 April 1887, A12, 26, HBCA PAM, fo. 104; 22 January 1887, fo. 42; 4 June 1886, A12, 25, fo. 95; and 6 December 1888, A12, 26, fo. 519.
- ⁸⁰ G. Young, *Manitoba Memories* (Toronto: Briggs, 1897), p. 332.
- ⁸¹ Wrigley to Armit, 22 September 1884, A12, 27, HBCA PAM, fo. 27; Brydges to Armit, 8 March 1887, A12, 26, fo. 79; Hudson's Bay Company advertisement, 93, 847; and Brydges to Armit, 8 March 1887, A12, 26, fo. 80.
- ⁸² McGowan, *Grassland Settlers*, p. 20.
- ⁸³ Brydges to Armit, 29 March 1886, A12, 25, HBCA PAM, fo. 60-61.
- ⁸⁴ Armit to Brydges, 19 May 1886, A6, 56, HBCA PAM, fo. 623b; Brydges to Armit, 3 May 1886, A12, 25, fo. 70-1.
- ⁸⁵ Plan No. 654W for Millwood townsite was registered on 21 July 1888.
- ⁸⁶ Chipman to Ware (Armit's successor), 14 April 1889, A12, L, 123, 1, Letter No. 440, HBCA PAM; Brydges to Armit, 16 April 1888, A12, 26, fo. 359; 2 May 1888, A12, 26, fo. 378; Minutes of the Governor and Committee, 2 August 1888, A4, 49, fo. 15; Brydges to Armit, 21 September 1888, A12, 26, fo. 438-42; Beaver (Armit) to Brydges (telegram), 16 October 1888, A4, 49, fo. 16; Minutes of the Governor and Committee, 23 October 1888, A4, 49, fo. 17d; and Armit to Smith, 18 December 1888, A7, 5, fo. 111-12.
- ⁸⁷ James Lawson, Brydges' replacement, was appointed as the Company's "Land Agent" after Brydges' death in February 1889.
- ⁸⁸ The animosity between Smith and Brydges is discussed at some length in Wilson, "In a Business Way," pp. 114-37.
- ⁸⁹ Bellan has suggested that Smith used his influence to have the CPR run through Winnipeg to enhance the value of the HBC Reserve. See "The Development of Winnipeg," p. 42.
- ⁹⁰ Brydges' enemies claimed that he had maintained his ties with the Grand Trunk Railway. See Wilson, "In a Business Way," p. 136.
- ⁹¹ See, for example, Ruben Bellan, *Winnipeg's First Century* (Winnipeg: Queenston House, 1978), p. 23.

4. **BUSINESS-GOVERNMENT CO-OPERATION IN TOWNSITE PROMOTION IN REGINA AND MOOSE JAW, 1882-1903***

J. WILLIAM BRENNAN

Now, the Canadian Pacific Railway . . . know what they are about. They intend to make money out of their lots, and the Government have said to the Canadian Pacific Railway: Now, you can manage it better than the Government can, because your fortunes are concerned in it; we will put the land up to a given area; we will be a partnership; you take charge of it, and sell the lots, and return to the Treasury half the amount of the sales. . . . That is the agreement, and I think it is a very good one; it costs us nothing and the Company are very glad to do it.¹

Such was Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's explanation to the House of Commons in March 1883 of an arrangement whereby the Canadian Pacific Railway and the federal government were to pool their lands in Regina, recently named the capital of the North-West Territories. Canadian history contains numerous examples of close working arrangements between public and private bodies to promote settlement and economic development, and never more so than in the late nineteenth century. Three of these are well known, and have been the object of a good deal of scholarly investigation. The inauguration of the Department of the Interior's generous grazing lease policy in 1881 helped to induce British and eastern Canadian capitalists to develop the beef cattle industry in what is now southern Alberta. In that same year the task of promoting agricultural settlement was entrusted to colonization companies which were permitted to purchase land from the government on easy terms. Substantial cash and land subsidies facilitated the construction of the first transcontinental railway during the early 1880s.²

Another instance of this kind which is not so well known concerned the promotion and development of the new western towns that sprang up along the CPR main line between 1881 and 1883, one of

*The research for this chapter was assisted in part by a grant from the President's Research Fund of the University of Regina.

which was Regina. In fact Regina was one of four townsites controlled jointly by the federal government, the CPR and the Canada North-West Land Company. The origins of that consortium, and the impact of its policies upon the communities concerned, have gone largely unnoticed. Both the most recent scholarly history of the CPR and the standard work on that company's land and settlement policies devote scant attention to the subject, as does the only detailed history of any of the four towns.³

How, then, did the federal government come to find itself in partnership with the CPR in promoting new townsites on the prairies? Macdonald's explanation to Parliament in 1883 might suggest that it was his government which took the initiative in proposing such an arrangement, but this does not appear to have been the case. Indeed, the possibility that the government and a private railway company would join forces in this fashion seems not to have been contemplated at any time during the decade preceding the signing of the contract with George Stephen and his associates in October 1880. It is true, of course, that Liberal and Conservative administrations alike were determined that the construction of the proposed transcontinental line should enhance the value of government and railway lands in equal measure. Thus when Parliament approved legislation providing for a land grant of 50,000,000 acres as an inducement to construction in 1872, it stipulated that the land be located in alternate blocks along the right of way. Each block granted to the railway company would therefore be opposite a block of like width reserved for the government on the other side of the proposed line.⁴ The same principle was embodied in the land subsidy offered, but never accepted, by the Liberal government headed by Alexander Mackenzie. With one slight modification—the substitution of individual sections for the larger tracts of land envisaged in the earlier schemes—it can be found as well in the contract negotiated with the CPR "syndicate" in 1880.⁵

During the lengthy debate which preceded the ratification of that contract by Parliament the Minister of Railways and Canals, Charles Tupper, and Macdonald intimated only that the government and the CPR would work in concert to promote immigration and settlement. There was no hint at all of co-operation with that company in promoting new townsites. Indeed there were few members on either side of the House of Commons who foresaw that the railway would, as Richard Cartwright put it, not only "fix the value of every man's farm and every man's land [but also] decide where towns and villages shall be..."⁶ Among the terms of the contract which caused the most heated debate was clause 16, which read:

The Canadian Pacific Railway, and all stations and station grounds, workshops, buildings, yards and other property, rolling

stock and appurtenances required and used for the construction and working thereof, and the capital stock of the Company, shall be forever free from taxation by the Dominion, or by any Province hereafter to be established, or by any Municipal Corporation therein; and the lands of the Company, in the North-West Territories, until they are either sold or occupied, shall also be free from such taxation for 20 years after the grant thereof from the Crown.⁷

That clause was to be of particular significance for urban centres located along the railway, yet Parliament was preoccupied only with the merit or otherwise of the tax exemption on the land grant and its probable impact upon the homesteader.⁸

The contract approved, the CPR set about the task of constructing its line to the Pacific. It was only a few months later that the company made the momentous decision to abandon the originally surveyed route, northwest from Winnipeg along the North Saskatchewan River to the Yellowhead Pass, in favour of one straight west from Winnipeg through the Kicking Horse Pass. The traditional view has it that more optimistic assessments of the agricultural potential of the southern prairies and a desire to forestall competition by rival American lines were the principal reasons for the change.⁹ At least one member of the railway's board of directors recognized as well that by driving the line through virgin territory which had never known a settler, the CPR would create its own traffic and avoid potential difficulties with established business interests, particularly real estate interests. Some settlement already existed along the North Saskatchewan, and many of those who had established themselves at Prince Albert, Battleford or Edmonton had an eye to the profits that could be made from land adjacent to the right of way. Moving the line gave the CPR a clear field, enabling it to decide arbitrarily the location of its yards and stations and the towns that grew up around them.¹⁰

In this task the CPR enjoyed the complete co-operation of the federal government. On March 11, 1882, the Department of the Interior temporarily withdrew from settlement all even-numbered sections next to and along both sides of the main line "with a view to secure to the treasury the enhanced value of these sections, particularly of such as will be required for station and town site purposes."¹¹ In other words, these sections were to be withheld from homestead entry until town or station sites along the railway had been located, thereby preventing speculators from reaping any benefit from lands so advantageously situated.

Such co-operation was soon to be extended further. On March 22 the CPR wrote to the Department of the Interior concerning the possibility of acquiring as sites for stations even-numbered sections which had been homesteaded or pre-empted but where the requirement

respecting continuous residence had not yet been complied with. The matter was pursued in private discussions, and the government's response, communicated on June 7, was that

in case the Company should desire to lay out a town plot about any such station, on an even-numbered section, the Minister is willing that this should be done by the Compy [sic], but on joint account with the Government; that is to say, that the Company should pay over to the Government from time to time, as may be hereafter arranged, one-half the net proceeds of the sale of any lots in such town plot.¹²

In this fashion did the government and the CPR become joint owners of Virden, in western Manitoba, though the laying out of the townsite was not to be without its complications.¹³

The assistance of an ever more co-operative federal government did not completely eliminate the problem of the speculator. The route of the transcontinental railway had been surveyed as far west as Moose Jaw Creek, some four hundred miles from Winnipeg, and during the spring and early summer of 1882 men were busy taking up land at every likely townsite adjacent to the line. Some of these "speculative squatters and spurious homesteaders" were operating on their own account. Many others were in the employ of North West Mounted Police officers or other government officials, Winnipeg real estate firms, or subcontractors working for Langdon, Shepherd and Company, who were building the line.¹⁴ At Indian Head, where the Qu'Appelle Valley Farming Company was attempting to transplant the large "bonanza farm" of the American West to Canadian soil, there was, according to one observer, only one *bona fide* settler; the remainder were squatters determined to "hold the land in anticipation of a town site. . . ."¹⁵ The same situation prevailed at the spot where the railway was to cross Pile of Bones (Wascana) Creek, some five or six miles north of the present site of Regina. A last minute change in the survey outflanked those who had taken up land there, however, and at the point where the survey was run across the Creek on May 18, 1882 only three settlers could be found.¹⁶

Another group of speculators who had interests in the vicinity were less easily dealt with, for among their number was Edgar Dewdney, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories and a close friend of the Prime Minister. Battleford, a central point on what was then the surveyed route of the transcontinental railway, had served as the capital of the Territories since 1876, but a transfer of the seat of government to a more southerly location followed naturally from the CPR's abandonment of the North Saskatchewan valley. The choice fell to Dewdney and to W. C. Van Horne, general manager of the line. Ostensibly for engineering reasons the railway had skirted the valley of the Qu'Appelle, eliminating what would have been the most attrac-



Courtesy of Saskatchewan Archives

HON. EDGAR DEWDNEY

tive setting for the capital. Instead they chose the place where the line crossed Wascana Creek. On 30 June 1882 Dewdney issued a notice reserving to the government township seventeen, range twenty, west of the second meridian, later enlarged to include half of the adjoining township seventeen, range nineteen. The matter of the capital was settled, in Winnipeg, on 12 August and the decision transmitted to Macdonald. The townsite proper, consisting of sections nineteen and thirty in range nineteen, and twenty-four and twenty-five in range twenty, was christened Regina, in honour of Queen Victoria, when the first train arrived on 23 August 1882.¹⁷

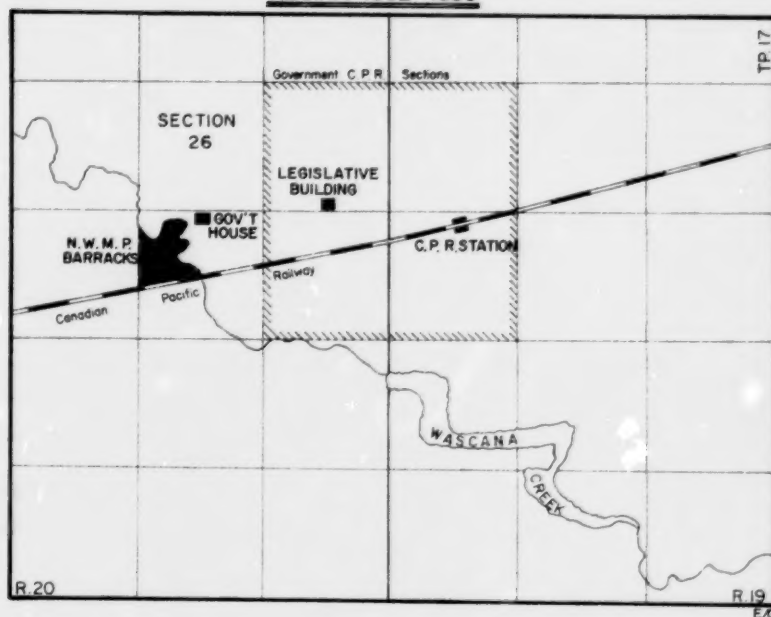
Dewdney's official justification for the choice rested upon the fact that Regina occupied "a central position within the Provisional District of Assiniboia, and also on account of its being the natural centre of a vast and rich agricultural country."¹⁸ Others disagreed, and a storm of controversy erupted. There was much objection in the press and in Parliament, both over the fact that Regina had been chosen over some other site, and over the actual sections on which the town was located. As to the first, the *Saskatchewan Herald* (Battleford) declared on September 30, 1882:

The choice of this capital has but one thing to recommend it—it lies on the line of railway; but that advantage is also enjoyed by hundreds of other places which have in addition both wood and water. Pile of Bones has little of the latter and none of the former, standing as it does in the midst of a bleak and treeless plain. However rich the soil may be, the lack of wood and water in the vicinity must militate against its becoming a place of very great importance.

There was more than a little truth in comments such as these. Regina did possess few natural advantages as a townsite, situated as it was on a vast treeless plain with a meandering creek its only nearby source of water. To a greater or lesser extent, however, these same faults were shared by the other clusters of shacks and tents along the line which were suggested as alternatives—Indian Head, Troy and Moose Jaw. None had possessed any commercial importance before the coming of the railway; like Regina they were all creatures of the CPR.

It was also alleged that Dewdney's interest in a section of land adjacent to the four comprising the townsite had influenced his selection of Regina as the capital. There can be no doubt that the Lieutenant-Governor had more than a passing interest in unearned increment. He readily admitted that he had an interest in the Regina section (which had been acquired from the Hudson's Bay Company) but claimed that he had other, and more extensive, interests near other possible sites which had been rejected.¹⁹ Speculation in land was certainly common enough during the early 1880s, but if this was a factor influencing Dewdney's choice, he proved no match for the CPR.

REGINA: 1882-1883



MAP 1

Dewdney and Van Horne had recommended a site on Wascana Creek, within the original reserve in township seventeen, range twenty, but the CPR subsequently located their station on section nineteen, half a mile east of the two original townsite sections. Dewdney himself was not without influence, and he managed to persuade the federal government to locate the Lieutenant-Governor's residence, the Indian Office and the chambers of the Territorial Council on or near Wascana Creek, adjacent to the section in which he had an interest (see Map 1).²⁰ At the same time as the capital was removed from Battleford to Regina, it had also been decided that the headquarters of the North-West Mounted Police should be transferred from Fort Walsh to a point on the CPR main line. Regina was selected, the choice again being Dewdney's, and it was his decision too that the new barracks be built immediately west of the Creek, some two and a half miles from the railway station.²¹ As it turned out, though, the placement of the station proved too powerful an advantage for even Dewdney to overcome. The Customs Office, Dominion Lands Office and Post Office were all located near the station, at the urging of the CPR, and it is here that the centre of Regina remains to the present day.

Existing accounts of the struggle between Dewdney and the CPR have emphasized his political and personal connections with Macdonald.²² It should not be forgotten, however, that the railway had itself developed some powerful alliances. Faced with a shortage of working capital, the CPR had sold a substantial portion of its land grant, and all of the town and village sites to be laid out along the main line between Brandon and the eastern boundary of British Columbia, to the Canada North-West Land Company in June 1882. A consortium of British and Canadian capitalists, the Canada North-West Land Company was from the outset "practically a branch of the Land Department of the C.P.R." A total of forty-seven townsites thereby became the joint property of the railway and its business ally. The CPR was to receive half the net proceeds from future sales, and four trustees were subsequently appointed to take responsibility for advertising and selling the lots. Donald A. Smith and R. B. Angus represented the CPR; E. B. Osler and W. B. Scarth the Canada North-West Land Company. Scarth, general manager of the latter company, was to be the most active figure, and, like Dewdney, was very much in the confidence of Macdonald.²³

The trusteeship agreement between the CPR and the Canada North-West Land Company envisaged the possible inclusion of a third partner. It provided that

if at any time hereafter the Government of the Dominion should join with the said companies in establishing a town plot or site to be composed in part of lots belonging to the Government... the said [companies] shall endeavor to cause the sale of the lots to be contributed by the Government to be entrusted to the said trustees, and to arrange that such sales shall be made in common with the sales of the other portions of such town plot or site, and in that case it may be made a condition of such arrangement that the trustees shall account for and pay over to the Government such proportion of the entire sales of the lots of such town plot or site as shall be agreed upon by the Government, the railway company, the Land Company and the trustees....²⁴

The federal government had already shown, in the case of Virden, that it was more than willing to collaborate in such a joint venture, and it is clear that from the time the land adjacent to Wascana Creek was reserved the government and the railway intended to share in promoting this townsite as well. Macdonald was not slow to see how their joint interests would best be served. Early in September he wrote to Dewdney:

The Assembly or Council Chamber should be in the town also the Government offices, Land and Indian offices, Registrars Customs and Excise.... These should be in the heart of the town and so placed as to increase the Value of the Lots around them. As the Govt. and C.P.R. are joint partners in the City we must help to



W. B. SCARTH

Courtesy of Public Archives of Canada

add to the Value of the Town lots in every way we reasonably can.²⁵

So far as Regina was concerned, the joint venture proved immediately profitable. On November 10, Scarth was able to inform Macdonald that "we have sold over \$800,000 worth of lots at \$250 a lot." The CPR and the Canada North-West Land Company proved ever vigilant in guarding their interests. When rumours began to circulate some months later that Dewdney was doing his best "to take the town towards section 26..." Scarth was quick to remind Macdonald that it was not in the interests of either the government or the railway to see "the lots on that section... become more readily saleable to the detriment of the partnership sections."²⁶

Harmony did not always characterize relations between the government and the CPR in the promotion of the Regina townsite. The sale of lots there had been entrusted to a Winnipeg real estate firm, Brandon and McFee, whose advertisements boldly declared that "Regina will be the end of the CPR Division, which involves the employment of thousands of men, and the... junction of branch lines to the Great Peace River District in the North-West, and the Wood Mountain region to the South."²⁷ The CPR did initially lay down sidings there, but then subsequently refused to build any branch lines from that point. When pressed by Macdonald to explain this apparent change of heart, George Stephen replied that he could not

imagine how it ever came to pass that you thought there was any *agreement* to build a branch from it. We want to do all we can to make Regina a great success and anything and everything we can do to make it a success will be done, and I hope you will not allow anyone to even suggest to you, that the fact of the Govt. having a half interest in the site is going to make us any less eager for its success than if it all belonged to the Coy [sic]. Far better, if any feeling of this kind should arise, to dissolve the partnership between the Govt. and the Coy.²⁸

Relations were further strained when rumours began to circulate that the CPR intended to locate its repair shops in Moose Jaw, some forty miles west of the Territorial capital. This time it was Macdonald who expressed reservations about continuing the joint arrangement. Moose Jaw did in fact become the divisional point, much to the chagrin of Regina, but the partnership was not dissolved. Indeed, early in January 1883, the CPR suggested that Moose Jaw also be developed jointly since, as a divisional point, it would "probably become a place of some importance."²⁹ The offer was accepted and Moose Jaw joined Virden, Regina and Qu'Appelle (as Troy had been renamed) as joint enterprises of the government and the railway.

At first lots were sold through the Land Commissioner of the CPR, but on October 29, 1883 these townsites were conveyed to a body

of four trustees, whose responsibilities were to include the "formation, encouragement and establishment of the said several towns . . . and . . . the laying out, administration and sale of . . . town lots . . ." For reasons of convenience, the same individuals who managed the townsites owned jointly by the CPR and the Canada North-West Land Company were entrusted with the responsibility for these four, so that the government had no direct representation in this consortium. The Townsite Trustees first conducted business from Toronto, with W. B. Scarth and E. B. Osler sharing the administrative responsibilities. In 1884 the headquarters was transferred to Winnipeg and until 1887 Scarth assumed sole responsibility for managing the enterprise. H. H. Smith, the Commissioner of Dominion Lands at Winnipeg, was then appointed in his place, though Scarth continued to serve as a trustee and also for a time as Winnipeg's member in the House of Commons. In 1895 Scarth left Winnipeg to become Deputy Minister of Agriculture and L. A. Hamilton, Land Commissioner of the Canada North-West Land Company, assumed responsibility for managing the consortium which controlled the four townsites.³⁰

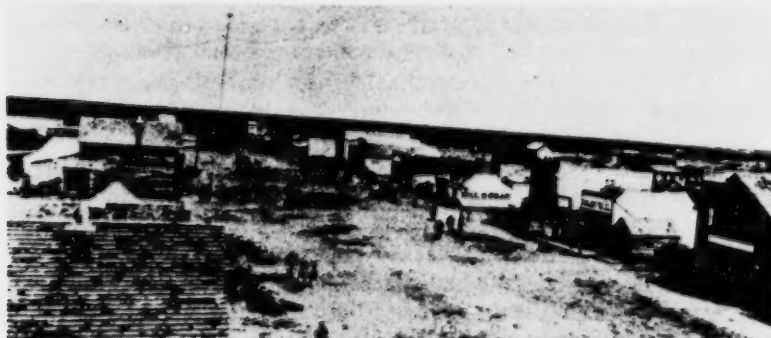
The Townsite Trustees showed considerable initiative, particularly in Regina and Moose Jaw, the two largest towns. In Regina, for instance, the Trustees expended more than \$14,000 during 1883 on the digging of a well, the grading of streets, and the construction of a dam on Wascana Creek which created an artificial lake and an assured water supply. In that same year a bonus of town lots was offered to Nicholas Flood Davin to found Regina's first newspaper, the *Leader*. Free lots were also granted for churches, and for a right of way into Regina for the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan Railway, which was chartered in 1883 to build a line from the capital north to Prince Albert. The Trustees also distributed free lots in Moose Jaw to assist in the establishment of a newspaper, churches and a brewery.³¹

The Trustees' efforts were all the more welcome because there was for some time no effective local government in either community. As early as December 1882 a group of Regina's more prominent citizens had begun circulating a petition requesting incorporation as a city under federal legislation. No action was taken by Ottawa, and for a time Regina was obliged to improvise. It was the ever-present danger of fire which led to the creation of an informal town council. This seven-member body and its larger and more elaborate successor, the so-called "Citizens' Committee," lacked the power to levy taxes, borrow money or enforce by-laws, and little was accomplished. Realizing this, the Citizens' Committee continued to press for incorporation, and at length they were successful. In October 1883 the North-West Council passed a municipal ordinance based largely on a draft prepared by the Committee, and Regina became the first town in the Territories to take

advantage of this legislation, incorporation coming two months later. Moose Jaw did not have any form of local government until it was incorporated as a town under this same ordinance in January 1884.³²

There was, of course, more than a little self-interest involved in the Trustees' apparent generosity. These expenditures for public improvements could be expected to enhance the desirability and the value of lots in both towns, and the *Leader* and the *Moose Jaw News* proved to be as aggressive boosters of their respective communities as were the Trustees themselves.³³ Their efforts were certainly rewarded with very impressive sales figures. A total of \$586,833.43 worth of lots were sold by the Trustees in Regina and Moose Jaw in 1883, with Regina sales accounting for \$462,194.68 of this figure. However, the boom collapsed the following year as the bottom fell out of land values in Winnipeg and financial difficulties beset the CPR. The effect was immediately apparent; only \$4,223.34 worth of lots were sold in Regina in 1884, and Moose Jaw sales totalled a mere \$571.66.³⁴

It was doubtless for this reason that the Trustees made no further expenditures for local improvements in Regina or Moose Jaw after 1884. The whole burden of carrying out necessary public works and providing other essential services thereafter fell upon the towns, and both experienced great difficulty in raising sufficient revenues for this purpose because the Trustees refused to pay taxes on unsold town lots. The CPR claimed exemption from municipal taxation on the strength of its charter, and the federal government likewise insisted that it could not be compelled to pay taxes. With their small population—a local census taken in 1884 put Regina's at 613 and Moose Jaw's at 720—and lack of power or influence the towns were in no position to dictate to their powerful benefactors, but their limited tax base proved a severe handicap. In Regina, for example, town residents paid taxes totalling



Courtesy of Saskatchewan Archives

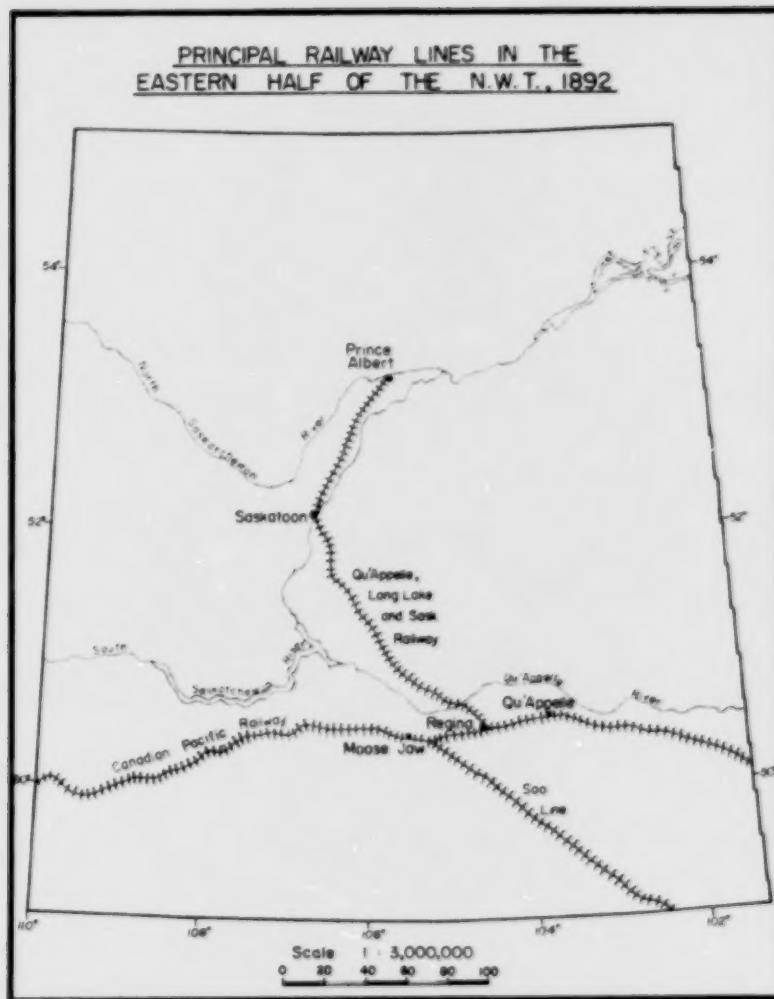
MOOSE JAW 1884

\$2,737 in 1885; a total of \$6,522 was levied upon property owned by non-residents, principally the Townsite Trustees.³⁵

The tax-exempt status of Regina's largest landowners was first raised in the local press in November 1884, and it was that town which took the initiative in proposing joint action with Moose Jaw in obtaining legal advice as to whether land still owned by the Trustees was liable to taxation. The Moose Jaw council expressed interest, and suggested that other communities in a similar position, such as Calgary, be invited to co-operate as well. Nothing came of these discussions—largely, it would seem, because of the unsettled state of affairs caused by the outbreak of the North-West Rebellion.³⁶

This was not the only consequence of that abortive Indian and Métis uprising so far as Regina and Moose Jaw were concerned. More important was its impact on the local economy. The Rebellion proved a godsend to local merchants and teamsters, but it also discouraged immigration to the Canadian prairies. The superior drawing power of the American West and a succession of dry years and poor crops in the Territories further retarded settlement.³⁷ This can be most effectively illustrated in terms of homestead entries, for there was from the beginning a close link between these small prairie towns and the farming country surrounding them. A Dominion Lands office had been opened in Regina in July 1882, and by 1884 a total of 4,148 homestead entries had been recorded there, more than at any other land office in the North-West Territories. These encouraging beginnings were cut short by the North-West Rebellion. While the Dominion Lands office in Regina continued to be one of the busiest in the Territories, cancellations actually outnumbered homestead entries in 1885 and 1886. In 1887 the number of cancellations nearly equalled the number of entries, and during the decade that followed more than a third as many homesteads were abandoned as were entered in the area tributary to Regina and Moose Jaw.³⁸

Even the building of new railway lines did little more than provide a temporary fillip. Construction of the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan line began with a flourish in 1885, but by 1886 only twenty-five miles of track had been laid. The "end of steel" moved no farther north until the line, leased to the CPR in 1889, was completed to Prince Albert the following year. The prospect of a railway link with the north was welcomed as Regina's "golden opportunity," but in fact few settlers took up land along the line. This also proved to be the case after the CPR built its "Soo Line" north from Portal, at the American border, through Estevan to Moose Jaw in 1892 (Map 2). The population of the district of Assiniboia, in which Moose Jaw and Regina were situated, increased from 22,083 in 1885 to 30,372 in 1891 and 67,385 a



E/C

MAP 2

decade later, but Regina's population at the turn of the century was only 2,249 and Moose Jaw's 1,558.³⁹

As the largest landowners in Regina and Moose Jaw, the Town-site Trustees also fell upon hard times. "In 1884, everything was very dull here, in 1885 and 1886, fearfully so," the Trustees' agent in Regina was later to recall. There were few new sales; the total for Regina and Moose Jaw for 1885 amounted to only \$1,370. In addition, many of the

original sales, particularly in Regina, returned to haunt the consortium. A great many of the lots there had been purchased as a speculation, and at highly inflated prices. Typically, the terms of sale had required a one-third down payment, and when economic conditions changed, and "it was found . . . that Regina was not going to turn out the gold mine that people had thought . . . there was a great outcry amongst the people who had bought lots. . . ." An agreement acceptable to all was in due course arrived at, and in February 1884 the government authorized the Trustees to grant deeds for one-third of the lots purchased, where the one-third down payment had been made, and to relieve such purchasers from further liability for the remaining two-thirds.⁴⁰

Another group of investors, largely Scottish and represented by W. B. Scarth, had subscribed the full amount, and they too made their dissatisfaction known. The government proved sympathetic, and for a very good reason. As the Minister of the Interior, Thomas White, explained to Macdonald,

A letter to Scarth from one of his Scotch correspondents the other day, intimated that he was going to publish the whole thing in Scotland, and charge the Government with dealing unfairly with foreign investors. I quite understand that there is no unfairness in people paying for what they purchase, but having agreed to relieve so many, it is just a question whether it would not be better to meet this thing at once and refund the money.

Scarth also interceded on behalf of his "Scotch friends" and in January 1887 the government agreed to refund a total of \$60,981 to these purchasers.⁴¹ Sales in the four towns controlled by the Townsite Trustees began to pick up again in 1888 and 1889 but, as Table I illustrates, the recovery proved to be short-lived.

With Regina and Moose Jaw marking time, and finding it increasingly difficult to collect taxes even from resident ratepayers, the tax exemption claimed by the Townsite Trustees again became a contentious issue. While not always very sure of their position, the two towns undertook to levy taxes each year against all property held by that consortium, but did not advertise or sell any of the lots for taxes. The Trustees proved unco-operative, refusing even to provide information necessary for the preparation of an accurate assessment roll, but increasingly found themselves on the defensive.⁴²

In some measure this was due to the fact that Regina and Moose Jaw found new allies in the controversy over the collection of taxes. One was the Territorial Council, which in 1886 took up the plight of the two communities and urged the federal government to dispose of its interest in the townsites. For their part both town councils passed resolutions in May 1887 demanding that the partnership between the

TABLE I

SALES BY THE TOWNSITE TRUSTEES
IN REGINA, MOOSE JAW, QU'APPELLE, AND VIRDEN,
1883-1899

Year	Value of Sales	Year	Value of Sales
1883	\$ 626,774.37	1892	18,174.05
1884	8,847.07	1893	7,380.70
1885	5,515.00	1894	1,588.00
1886	5,510.25	1895	2,821.67
1887	8,331.50	1896	1,195.00
1888	24,592.57	1897	2,070.55
1889	57,397.96	1898	2,377.00
1890	14,588.39	1899	4,085.96
1891	18,231.00		\$ 809,481.04

SOURCE: *Townsite Report*, p. 36.

government and the CPR be dissolved and the unsold lots disposed of at auction. The towns found another champion once the North-West Territories was given representation in Parliament, in the person of Nicholas Flood Davin. Both looked to the eloquent member for Assiniboia West to bring the tax question to the attention of Parliament, and they were not disappointed. Developments in Manitoba also aided the cause of Moose Jaw and Regina. The *Manitoba Free Press* was accusing the CPR of shielding the Canada North-West Land Company from taxation, and the grievances of municipalities in that province were also being aired in the House of Commons.⁴³

Whether owing to this mounting criticism, or to the fact that the local court of revision rejected the appeal of the Canada North-West Land Company against its assessment, W. B. Scarth and the town council of Regina began negotiations to settle the tax question in August 1887. The proposal advanced by the town would have remitted all arrears of taxes assessed against the Townsite Trustees prior to 1887 if the Canada North-West Land Company paid its current taxes and agreed not to dispute the right of the town "to assess in future the interest of the Company in lands held by the Trustees." The exemption enjoyed by the CPR and the federal government would continue as before. The proposal also stipulated that the agreement would have to be ratified by a vote of the ratepayers before it would take effect, and that the Canada North-West Land Company would pay half the cost of holding such a vote. Council drafted a bylaw to be submitted to the ratepayers, and sent a copy to Scarth for his opinion. Amendments suggested by Scarth were judged unacceptable, however, and the negotiations came to an end.⁴⁴



Courtesy of Saskatchewan Archives

REGINA, c. 1887

Undaunted, Regina continued to press for a settlement with the Townsite Trustees. When it became known early in 1888 that the controversy between the Manitoba and federal governments over the CPR's monopoly clause was near resolution, the railway having agreed to its abolition, Council urged Davin "to use his best endeavours to obtain at this juncture the right to tax the Canadian Pacific Railway Companies [sic] interests in this . . . and other Town Sites in the North-West Territories." Nothing came of this, and when the town's tax problems were drawn to Ottawa's attention again a year later it was with the same fruitless result.⁴⁵

Negotiations between the Moose Jaw council and the Townsite Trustees proceeded in a much more desultory fashion, never reaching even the near agreement Regina had achieved in 1887. Thus it must have been with some surprise that the Moose Jaw council learned in January 1889 that the Townsite Trustees were prepared to settle the tax question. Mayor G. J. Simpson and J. H. Ross, Moose Jaw's representative in the Territorial Legislature, met with W. B. Scarth in Regina to work out terms. These were endorsed in principle by the Moose Jaw council on 13 February 1889 and submitted to Scarth for the approval of the Trustees. An agreement was formally signed on 15 August 1889. It provided that the Trustees would pay all taxes outstanding against the Canada North-West Land Company for the years 1887, 1888 and 1889, a sum fixed at \$5,040.60, and in future pay one-quarter of the taxes levied upon all unsold lots still held by the Trustees in Moose Jaw.⁴⁶

An agreement with Regina followed soon afterward. There the Trustees agreed to make a lump sum payment of \$4,000 to clear up

arrears of taxes and to pay henceforth one-quarter of the taxes due on all unsold lots.⁴⁷ It should be emphasized that in both cases the Trustees were admitting only that the town had the right to collect taxes on the one-quarter interest of the Canada North-West Land Company, since it could claim no exemption under law. Thus the Trustees were giving up no more in Regina or Moose Jaw than they were prepared to give up in Calgary, where an agreement ending a lengthy dispute over that town's right to tax the half interest of the Canada North-West Land Company was also reached in 1889.⁴⁸ With the Trustees refusing to budge on the question of taxing the interests of the CPR or the federal government, the Moose Jaw and Regina councils accepted the terms offered, albeit grudgingly. J. W. Smith, Mayor of Regina in 1889, was later to admit that the total arrears of taxes assessed against the Townsite Trustees there had been four times the amount offered, and that Council had regarded the agreement only as the best that could be obtained under the circumstances.⁴⁹

Relations between the Townsite Trustees and the two communities improved after 1889. The consortium donated land for a public park in Moose Jaw in 1895, and provided a site for the Territorial Exhibition in Regina which was afterward sold to the town.⁵⁰ Under this outward appearance of harmony, though, there still remained a lingering sense of grievance. Although the tax agreements of 1889 did ease the financial burden somewhat in subsequent years, both towns continued to suffer a substantial revenue loss. Regina, for instance, collected only \$10,013 of the \$40,325 in taxes due on property owned by the Townsite Trustees between 1890 and 1899. A limited tax base made it difficult for either town to provide even the most basic services for its citizens. Regina's council began laying sewer lines in 1891 and 1892, but much of the Territorial capital continued for many years to be served by a scavenger who dumped the contents of his cart at the edge of town. There was no town constable until 1892, and a volunteer fire brigade had to make the best of inadequate equipment and an oftentimes insufficient water supply. The situation was little different in Moose Jaw, where no sewer and water lines were laid until after the turn of the century, and the lack of proper sanitation and fire protection were serious problems.⁵¹

In Moose Jaw's case there was an additional reason for dissatisfaction with the Townsite Trustees, or more particularly the federal government: its alleged unwillingness to erect public buildings there. "We would point out to the Government," declared the Moose Jaw Board of Trade in a petition to Ottawa in 1890,

that although large sums of money have accrued to the Dominion of Canada from the sale of lots, and notwithstanding the fact that private taxation is increasing the value of the balance of their

property, the town of Moosejaw [sic], in so far as public grants are concerned, has been entirely overlooked.

We are aware that the municipalities of Calgary and Regina similarly situated, have been unable to assess and realize on the Government interest, they have, however, indirectly benefited by the Government interest in their municipalities inasmuch as the Government has . . . made large permanent improvements in the way of bridges and public buildings within these municipalities.⁵²

The issue found its way to Parliament again early in 1896, with Davin urging the federal government to dispose at once of its lands in Moose Jaw at any price so that they might become subject to taxation. That the government had extensive real estate holdings in Moose Jaw and other towns seems to have taken many members of the House by surprise—including the Leader of the Opposition, Wilfrid Laurier. So also were some surprised to learn that in Moose Jaw fully one-half of the surveyed area of the town still remained in the hands of the Townsite Trustees. Nevertheless Davin's proposal was not well received. By a strange twist of fate it fell to T. Mayne Daly, whose homestead at Virden the CPR had once coveted, to state the government's position as Minister of the Interior:

Of course the Dominion Government are holding their lands in trust for the people of Canada, and I think it is going too far to ask the Government to alienate this portion of the public domain in the town site of Moose Jaw. . . . Until the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canada North-West Land Company consent to the disposal of the lands . . . the Government could not possibly take any action in the matter.

The Liberals proved no more receptive to Davin's proposal, though they were of the opinion that since the government had gone into business as a real estate speculator in each of the four communities, it ought to pay taxes like others in the same position.⁵³

Within a few months the Conservatives were no longer in power in Ottawa, and this altered the relationship between two of the principals in the consortium which had controlled much of the land in Regina, Moose Jaw and the other communities since 1883. The CPR had been the creation of the Conservatives, and it was hardly to be expected that the close bond which had hitherto existed between the government and the railway would continue with the Liberals in office. Furthermore, the new administration inherited a number of thorny issues—notably the locating of the remaining portion of that company's land subsidy—which were to lead to a good deal of friction. Although the cooling of relations seems to have had little or nothing to do with the operations of the Townsite Trustees, the four towns were to benefit indirectly from the change. In November 1898 the government of Prime Minister Laurier decided to end the joint venture with the CPR and the Canada

North-West Land Company. Though no public announcement of the decision seems to have been made at the time, rumours of the impending dissolution of the partnership did come to the notice of Moose Jaw's town council. Rumours were no substitute for hard information concerning the new government's intentions, though, and Moose Jaw turned once more to that much-used device, the petition to Ottawa.⁵⁴

In 1900 a new element was introduced into the taxation controversy with the discovery that the title to all the lots that made up the four townsites had been vested absolutely in the Trustees in 1883. As J. H. Ross explained to Regina's council, this meant that the Townsite Trustees could claim no exemption from taxation and in future would have no choice but to pay the full amount of taxes due. So convinced was the Territorial government that the courts would now see the matter in the same light, that it was "prepared to make a test case on behalf of all the Municipalities and . . . pay all costs in connection therewith." N. F. Davin was quick to raise the matter in Parliament, pressing the Liberals to produce the documents which would prove the contention of the Territorial government.⁵⁵

These had not yet been produced when on June 19 Laurier appointed a commission to audit the accounts kept by the Townsite Trustees and "investigate and report upon all matters connected with the administration and sale . . . of lands . . . in the several townsites. . . ." The Commission members, James Smart, Deputy Minister of the Interior, and E. F. Stephenson, Inspector of Crown Timber Agencies, heard testimony from officials of the four towns directly affected, employees of the CPR, the Canada North-West Land Company and the Department of the Interior, and other interested individuals. One of the Trustees, W. B. Scarth, was questioned at length, but another, E. B. Osler, refused to appear before the commission.⁵⁶

Much of the commission's time was taken up with a detailed examination of the Townsite Trustees' accounts, but the question of taxation also figured prominently, particularly at the hearings in Regina and Moose Jaw. Armed with new evidence, and buoyed by the promised support of the Territorial government, both towns took an aggressive stand. The 1889 agreements had been based upon misrepresentation, and, insofar as Regina was concerned, it now believed itself "not only . . . entitled to the balance of three-fourths of the taxes during the years the trustees paid the one quarter, since the agreement, but in future . . . to full taxes as against the trustees." If anything, Moose Jaw was even more adamant. The old grievance concerning the lack of public buildings there was resurrected. "We want a custom-house and post office worth at least \$20,000," Moose Jaw's town solicitor declared, "and think that inasmuch as Regina has received a large sum of money prior to 1889, that we should receive these public build-

ings... and also inasmuch as we have never had any public buildings like other towns."⁵⁷

In their report itself, Smart and Stephenson did not comment directly on the taxation question, but simply summarized the history of the quarrel between the Trustees and the towns. Most of the report was in fact devoted to a recounting of the numerous instances in which the Trustees were judged to have misused joint funds and overstepped the terms of the agreement of 1883.⁵⁸ Smart and Stephenson also questioned the propriety of the Trustees' making loans from the trust account to Nicholas Flood Davin, among others, and refunding money to cash purchasers after sales had been completed. A building had been constructed in Regina by the Canada North-West Land Company as a speculation and was afterward rented and then sold to the federal government at a sum which they judged excessive. As to the financial success of this joint venture, the commissioners again made no direct comment. Total receipts from the sale of lots in the four townsites to 31 December 1899 they calculated had been \$452,281, with Regina accounting for \$254,485 and Moose Jaw \$114,606 of this amount. After expenditures by the Townsite Trustees had been deducted there remained the sum of \$312,049, which had been divided among the three partners in the consortium.⁵⁹

Reaction to the report, made public early in 1901, was mixed. Liberal newspapers seized upon the irregularities in the laying out of the Virden townsite and the loan to Davin, involving as they did a former Conservative cabinet minister and back-bencher respectively.⁶⁰ E. B. Osler, himself a Conservative M.P., defended the actions of the Townsite Trustees and criticized Laurier for appointing "partisan commissioners." For its part, the government took steps to recover the money found to have been wrongfully charged to its account by the Trustees, and gave every indication that it intended to withdraw from the consortium. By this time the CPR was evidently anxious to see the partnership dissolved as well, and early in 1902 the government and the railway began the task of dividing up the unsold lots still held by the Townsite Trustees in each of the four towns.⁶¹

In the meantime the taxation controversy had continued to simmer. In November 1900 the Regina council wrote to the Attorney General of the North-West Territories seeking assurances that the promised financial assistance for the launching of a test case would be forthcoming. A favourable reply was duly received, and so too was a letter from the Townsite Trustees tendering one-quarter of the taxes due as payment in full for 1900. Acting on the advice of its solicitor, and hoping no doubt to acquire a larger share of the taxes assessed upon the Trustees' unsold lots, Council decided to return the cheque. No test case appears to have been launched, however, and in December

1901 the town solicitor advised Council to accept the one-quarter of the Trustees' taxes due. This Council did, but not without again placing its dissatisfaction on record and preparing another petition for transmission to Ottawa. In November 1902 the town council again meekly accepted the Trustees' cheque. The Moose Jaw council proved no less determined to obtain a larger share of tax revenues from the Trustees. It was also obliged to back down, however, after the town was advised by the Attorney General that inaccuracies in its assessment roll would prevent the taking of any legal action.⁶²

While the controversy seemed no closer to resolution as 1902 gave way to 1903, it was soon to become irrelevant, at least insofar as the tax-exempt status of the federal government was concerned. The final step in the winding up of the consortium—a division of the remaining unsold lots—was completed in July 1902, with the government receiving half the lots in each of the four towns.⁶³ It was with an eye to the pending dissolution of that partnership that Walter Scott, Davin's successor as the member for West Assiniboia, made a bold suggestion to Parliament. Taking the example of Regina, Scott pointed out that a total of \$42,040 in taxes levied against property owned by the Town-site Trustees remained uncollected. It would only be fair and reasonable, in view of the losses that Regina and the other towns had sustained by not being able to collect all the taxes owing from the



Courtesy of Saskatchewan Archives

SOUTH RAILWAY STREET, REGINA, 1902.

Trustees, "... for the government to hand over to these municipalities the half portion which comes to the government in the division."⁶⁴

Clifford Sifton, the Minister of the Interior, refused to commit the government, but the two largest towns affected were quick to endorse Scott's suggestion. The Liberals seem in fact to have been torn between making an outright gift of the remaining lots and disposing of them by public auction, but it was the former course which was decided upon in the end. The cabinet passed an order-in-council in April 1903 authorizing the Minister of the Interior "to grant the respective municipalities such of the lands or part thereof comprised in the said townsite as may be reverted in the Crown." In Regina this amounted to over 4,000 lots, in Moose Jaw to some 800, with the government keeping only a few as public reserves.⁶⁵

This marked the end of a joint venture in townsite promotion unique in Canadian history. It was, in retrospect, a curious arrangement, for the federal government seems to have found itself in partnership with the CPR more by accident than by design. Some townsites established on both odd- and even-numbered sections (Qu'Appelle, Regina and Moose Jaw) were developed jointly; others, such as Calgary, were not.⁶⁶ The exhaustive investigation into the affairs of the Townsite Trustees in 1900 found no explanation for the haphazard fashion in which townsites along the CPR main line had been shared by the railway and the government, and none has come to light since.⁶⁷

Whatever its origins, however, it can be said that this twenty-year partnership produced no glittering example of successful townsite promotion. By the turn of the century, to be sure, the Townsite Trustees had sold some \$809,000 worth of lots, principally in Regina and Moose Jaw, but in many instances not all of the purchase price had been paid, or a portion had been refunded. Actual receipts from sales amounted to little more than half that figure. By comparison, the CPR had realized more than \$868,000 from the sale of lots in Vancouver between 1886 and 1888 alone.⁶⁸ The limited success of this joint venture in townsite promotion had little to do with the policies pursued by the Townsite Trustees. Like the Hudson's Bay Company, which also had extensive real estate holdings in Winnipeg and some other urban centres,⁶⁹ the Trustees fell victim to the economic depression which settled over the prairies after 1883. As it turned out, though, the Trustees' meagre sales during the last decade and a half of the nineteenth century proved a blessing in disguise for Regina and Moose Jaw. The gift of the federal government's share of the remaining unsold lots in 1903 came at a time when favourable economic developments were beginning to usher in a new era of prosperity and rapid growth for both communities.

NOTES

- ¹ *House of Commons Debates*, 1883, p. 277 (hereafter cited as *H.C.D.*).
- ² On the development of ranching see D. H. Breen, "The Canadian West and the Ranching Frontier, 1875-1922," Ph.D. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1972). The standard work on colonization companies is A. N. Lalonde, "Settlement in the North-West Territories by Colonization Companies, 1881-1891," Ph.D. Thesis (Laval University, 1969). Histories of the CPR are, of course, legion; most of the scholarly works are cited elsewhere in this chapter.
- ³ W. K. Lamb, *History of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (New York: Macmillan, 1977), pp. 219-21; J. B. Hedges, *Building the Canadian West: The Land and Colonization Policies of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (New York: Macmillan, 1939), pp. 84-86; E. G. Drake, *Regina: The Queen City* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1955), pp. 7, 9, 17, 21, 67.
- ⁴ *Statutes of Canada*, 35 Vic., Chapter 71.
- ⁵ J. B. Hedges, *The Federal Railway Land Subsidy Policy of Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934), pp. 3-28.
- ⁶ *H.C.D.*, 1880-81, pp. 70, 149, 281.
- ⁷ *Statutes of Canada*, 44 Vic., Chapter 1.
- ⁸ *H.C.D.*, 1880-81, pp. 97, 141, 298, 396-97, 732-34.
- ⁹ H. A. Innis, *History of the Canadian Pacific Railway*, 1923, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), pp. 97-103.
- ¹⁰ Pierre Berton, *The Last Spike: The Great Railway, 1881-1885* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), pp. 18-19.
- ¹¹ Report of the Deputy Minister, Department of the Interior, *Canada Sessional Papers*, 1883, No. 23, p. xi (hereafter cited as *C.S.P.*). Even-numbered sections in this "Mile Belt" were opened for homesteading again in 1884, *C.S.P.*, 1885, No. 13, p. xi.
- ¹² Drinkwater to Russell, 22 March 1882, *C.S.P.*, 1883, No. 27, p. 185; Russell to Drinkwater, 7 June 1882, Sir John A. Macdonald Papers, pp. 121416-17, Public Archives of Canada (PAC) (hereafter cited as Macdonald Papers).
- ¹³ *Order-in-Council No. 2778, of Dec. 29th, 1900 Approving Report, Evidence and Cash Statements Submitted by the Townsite Commissioners Appointed by Order-in-Council No. 1527 of June 19th, 1900*, pp. 4, 46-47, 71, Archives of Saskatchewan (AS) (hereafter cited as *Townsite Report*).
- ¹⁴ Report of the Deputy Minister, Department of the Interior, *C.S.P.*, 1884, No. 12, p. xiv; Memorandum dated 13 November 1885, William Pearce Papers, Private Letterbook, 1883-1888, pp. 380-94, University of Alberta Archives (hereafter cited as Pearce Papers).
- ¹⁵ Dewdney to Macdonald, 4 June 1882, Macdonald Papers, p. 89699.
- ¹⁶ Memorandum, Barclay to Pearce, 5 August 1882, Department of the Interior, Dominion Lands Branch Records, File 70199, PAC (hereafter cited as Dom. Lands Br. Records).
- ¹⁷ Drake, *Regina*, p. 7; Dewdney to Macdonald, 10 May 1882, Macdonald Papers, pp. 89681-83; Stephen to Macdonald, 12 August 1882, *ibid.*, p. 121445; *Manitoba Free Press* (Winnipeg), 24 August 1882.
- ¹⁸ Report of the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, *C.S.P.*, 1884, No. 12, p. 3.
- ¹⁹ *H.C.D.*, 1883, pp. 273-81; Dewdney to Macdonald, 5 May 1881, Macdonald Papers, pp. 89423-25; Dewdney to Macdonald, 9 August, 1882, *ibid.*, pp. 89712-24; Dewdney to Macdonald, 15 May 1883, *ibid.*, pp. 89785-87.
- ²⁰ Dewdney to Macdonald, 27 August 1882, *ibid.*, pp. 142774-76; Dewdney to Macdonald, 18 September 1882, *ibid.*, pp. 142804-11.
- ²¹ Report of the Deputy Minister, Department of the Interior, *C.S.P.*, 1883, No. 23, pp. xiii-xiv.
- ²² Drake, *Regina*, pp. 10-14; J. B. D. Larmour, "Edgar Dewdney, Commissioner of Indian Affairs and Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Territories, 1879-1888," M.A. Thesis (University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus, 1969), pp. 107-11.
- ²³ Hedges, *Building the Canadian West*, pp. 73-74, 85-86; Stephen to Macdonald, 28 October 1882, Macdonald Papers, p. 121556; H. Gilbert, *Awakening Continent: The Life of Lord Mount Stephen, Vol. I: 1829-91* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1965), pp. 104-5, *Townsite Report*, p. 86.
- ²⁴ Russell to Walsh, 3 August 1882, Dom. Lands Br. Records, File 70199; Stephen to Macdonald, 12 September 1882, Macdonald Papers, p. 121495; Macdonald to Dewdney, 8 September 1882, Edgar Dewdney Papers, pp. 405-6, Glenbow-Alberta Institute (GAI) (hereafter cited as Dewdney Papers).
- ²⁵ Scarth to Macdonald, 10 November 1882, Macdonald Papers, p. 142881; Scarth to Macdonald, 2 January 1883, Dewdney Papers, pp. 250-51.
- ²⁶ *Townsite Report*, pp. 10, 37-40; *Manitoba Free Press* (Winnipeg), 28 October 1882.
- ²⁷ Stephen to Macdonald, 28 October 1882, Macdonald Papers, pp. 121556-57, Emphasis in original.
- ²⁸ Macdonald to McIntyre, 12 December 1882, Macdonald Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 22, No. 41; Davin to Macdonald, 2 November 1883, *ibid.*, pp. 190761-62; *H.C.D.*, 1884, pp. 37-38; Drinkwater to Minister of the Interior, 10 January 1883, *C.S.P.*, 1883, No. 27, pp. 192-93.

- ³⁰ Joint trustee agreement respecting Regina, Moose Jaw, Qu'Appelle and Virden, C.S.P., 1887, No. 34c; *Townsite Report*, pp. 3, 12, 94-95; J. K. Johnson, ed., *The Canadian Directory of Parliament, 1867-1967* (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1968), p. 520.
- ³¹ *Townsite Report*, p. 11, 109; N. Ward, "Davin and the Founding of the Leader," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. 6 (Winter 1953), pp. 13-16; K. A. Foster, "Moose Jaw: The First Decade, 1882-1892," M.A. Thesis (University of Regina, 1978), pp. 24, 90, 96.
- ³² A. N. Reid, "Informal Town Government in Regina, 1882-3," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. 6 (Autumn 1953), pp. 81-88 and "Urban Municipalities in the North-West Territories: Their Development and Machinery of Government," *ibid.*, Vol. 9 (Spring 1956), pp. 41-62; Foster, "Moose Jaw," pp. 78-79.
- ³³ *Regina Leader*, 1 March 1883; *Moose Jaw News*, 4 May 1883.
- ³⁴ Memorandum of total sales in joint townsites, Canada North-West Land Company Records, Miscellaneous Written Reports, 1884-1888, p. 222. GAI (hereafter cited as C.N.W.L. Co. Records). Qu'Appelle and Virden sales increased the figure to \$626,774.37. Total sales for the four communities in 1884 amounted to \$8,847.07.
- ³⁵ *Townsite Report*, p. 109; *Moose Jaw News*, 18 January 1884; Regina Tax Assessment Roll, 1885, AS.
- ³⁶ *Regina Leader*, 27 November 1884; Regina Town Council Minutes, 19 January 1885, AS (hereafter cited as Regina Minutes); Moose Jaw Town Council Minutes, 16 March 1885 and 11 May 1885, AS (hereafter cited as M.J. Minutes).
- ³⁷ R. B. Deane, *Mounted Police Life in Canada: A Record of Thirty-one Years' Service* (London: Cassell and Company, 1916), p. 22; A. N. Lalonde, "The North-West Rebellion and Its Effects on Settlers and Settlement in the Canadian West," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. 27 (Autumn 1974), pp. 95-102.
- ³⁸ Reports of the Land Board, Department of the Interior, C.S.P., 1883-1898.
- ³⁹ *Regina Leader*, 3 February 1885, 8 June 1886, 1 July 1890; Lamb, *History of C.P.R.*, p. 177; A. S. Morton and C. Martin, *History of Prairie Settlement and "Dominion Lands" Policy* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1938), pp. 96, 100-1; Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Census of the Three Provisional Districts of the North-West Territories, 1884-5*, p. 3; *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901*, Vol. 1, p. 5; *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911*, Vol. 1, p. 549.
- ⁴⁰ *Townsite Report*, pp. 7, 39, 40, 51, 89; Memorandum of total sales in joint townsites, C.N.W.L. Co. Records, Miscellaneous Written Reports, 1884-1888, p. 222. The total for the four communities was only \$5,515.
- ⁴¹ *Townsite Report*, p. 7; Thomson to Muirhead, 22 August 1886, Macdonald Papers, pp. 119100-101; Muirhead to Scarth, 21 September 1886, *ibid.*, pp. 119096-99; White to Macdonald, 6 March 1886, *ibid.*, p. 135521; Scarth to Macdonald, 10 October 1886, *ibid.*, pp. 119091-95.
- ⁴² M. J. Minutes, 21 December 1885 and 18 May 1886; Regina Minutes, 4 June 1888 and 3 August 1885; *Townsite Report*, p. 53.
- ⁴³ *Townsite Report*, p. 81; *Regina Leader*, 30 November 1886; Regina Minutes, 2 May 1887; M.J. Minutes, 2 May 1887; H.C.D., 1887, pp. 222, 803; Hedges, *Building the Canadian West*, pp. 82-83.
- ⁴⁴ *Regina Leader*, 19 July 1887; Regina Minutes, 15 August 1887, 17 October 1887, 24 October 1887, and 21 November 1887.
- ⁴⁵ Regina Minutes, 19 March 1888 and 21 January 1889.
- ⁴⁶ M.J. Minutes, 29 August 1887, 21 November 1887, 19 December 1887, 30 January 1889, 1 February 1889, 4 February 1889, and 13 February 1889; Memorandum of agreement between the town of Moose Jaw and the Townsite Trustees, 15 August 1889, C.N.W.L. Co. Records, File 49.
- ⁴⁷ Regina Minutes, 1 February 1889, 16 August 1889; Regina Town Council Bylaws, No. 66, 27 November 1889, AS.
- ⁴⁸ M. L. Foran, "The Calgary Town Council, 1884-1895: A Study of Local Government in a Frontier Environment," M.A. Thesis (University of Calgary, 1970), pp. 17-18.
- ⁴⁹ *Townsite Report*, p. 68.
- ⁵⁰ M.J. Minutes, 4 March 1895; Drake, *Regina*, pp. 84-88; Agreement between the town of Regina and the Townsite Trustees, 19 May 1896, C.N.W.L. Co. Records, File 59.
- ⁵¹ *Townsite Report*, p. 130; Drake, *Regina*, pp. 72-75, 115-17; Foster, "Moose Jaw," pp. 37-40, 221.
- ⁵² *Townsite Report*, p. 78.
- ⁵³ H.C.D., 1896, cols. 1453-75.
- ⁵⁴ Hedges, *Building the Canadian West*, p. 55; Stephenson to Pearce, 25 November 1898, Pearce Papers, File 619; M.J. Minutes, 19 December 1899 and 9 January 1900.
- ⁵⁵ Regina Minutes, 19 March 1900; H.C.D., 1900, cols. 2759 and 2998.
- ⁵⁶ *Townsite Report*, pp. 13, 15.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 68-69, 79-80, 82.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 68-69, 79-80, 82.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-8, 13.

- ⁶⁰ *Globe* (Toronto), 5 January 1901; *Manitoba Free Press* (Winnipeg), 5 January 1901; *Moose Jaw Times*, 11 January 1901.
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- ⁶² Regina Minutes, 19 November 1900, 3 December 1900, 17 December 1900, 16 December 1901, 17 March 1902, and 17 November 1902; *Regina Standard*, 5 December 1900; M.J. Minutes, 7 July 1902, 6 August 1902, 5 January 1903, 16 March 1903, 30 March 1903; *Moose Jaw Times*, 3 April 1903.
- ⁶³ Griffin to Tupper, Phippen and Tupper, 25 June 1902, C.N.W.L. Co. Records, File 56; Griffin to Tupper, Phippen and Tupper, 30 June 1902, *ibid.*, File 59; Griffin to Tupper, Phippen and Tupper, 4 July 1902, *ibid.*, Files 49, 64.
- ⁶⁴ *H.C.D.*, 1902, cols. 4407-408.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, cols. 4410-11; M.J. Minutes, 15 May 1902; Regina Minutes, 23 May 1902; Sifton to Scott, 4 October 1902, Walter Scott Papers, p. 61491, AS; Scott to McCallum, 20 March 1903, *ibid.*, p. 61569; Order-in-Council No. 520, 6 April 1903, PAC; *Moose Jaw Times*, 17 April 1903; Moose Jaw City Council Bylaws, 21 December 1903, No. 225, AS; Regina City Council Bylaws, No. 306, 1 May 1904, AS.
- ⁶⁶ The laying out of the Calgary townsite is described in M. Foran, "Early Calgary 1875-1895: The Controversies Surrounding the Townsite Location and the Direction of Town Expansion," in A. R. McCormack and I. MacPherson, eds., *Cities in the West* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1975), pp. 26-45.
- ⁶⁷ *Townsite Report*, p. 94.
- ⁶⁸ Hedges, *Building the Canadian West*, p. 87.
- ⁶⁹ J. S. Galbraith, "Land Policies of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1870-1913," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 32 (March 1951), pp. 1-21; and Selwood and Baril, "The Hudson's Bay Company and Prairie Town Development," Chapter 3 in this volume.

5. IN QUEST OF LIMITED URBAN STATUS: THE TOWN-BUILDING PROCESS IN MINNEDOSA, 1879-1906

BARRY POTYONDI

Like anxious tourists speeding from one western city to the next, prairie historians have by-passed the country town in their haste to redress the imbalance between rural and urban studies.¹ Yet there are, and will continue to be, many country towns that function as important urban centres within a limited sphere of influence. Our present knowledge of these limited urban centres, as they may be called, derives mainly from a few holistic studies of the prairie community system² and a host of panegyrics compiled by local historical committees. In the former works, the acquisition of urban status is usually explained by reference to changing transportation and communications networks after 1930; in the latter, virtually all change is ascribed to the inexorable march of Progress. Neither of these deterministic approaches concentrates on the settlement period from 1880 to 1910, when the opportunities for recruiting urban functions and the uncertainties of town-building were greatest.³ The present study attempts to demonstrate the importance of the settlement period in determining the eventual status of prairie communities by focusing on the stages of growth of Minnedosa, Manitoba. While there are obviously limits to the usefulness of generalizing from a single case, it can be said of the prairie urban process, as Michael Frisch has written with reference to the American context, that "if urbanization has been as basic an American experience in the past century and a half as most historians believe, then something of that importance, and of the fundamental changes involved, should be reflected in the city-building processes of a given community."⁴ By mirroring the town-building process in Minnedosa, this study should throw light on experiences common to similar towns across the prairies.

Prairie town-building was a deliberate social process, and not merely the result of fortuitous circumstances. After 1879 hundreds, perhaps thousands, of speculative town-builders came West, each determined to bend the flexible technology of the railway towards a

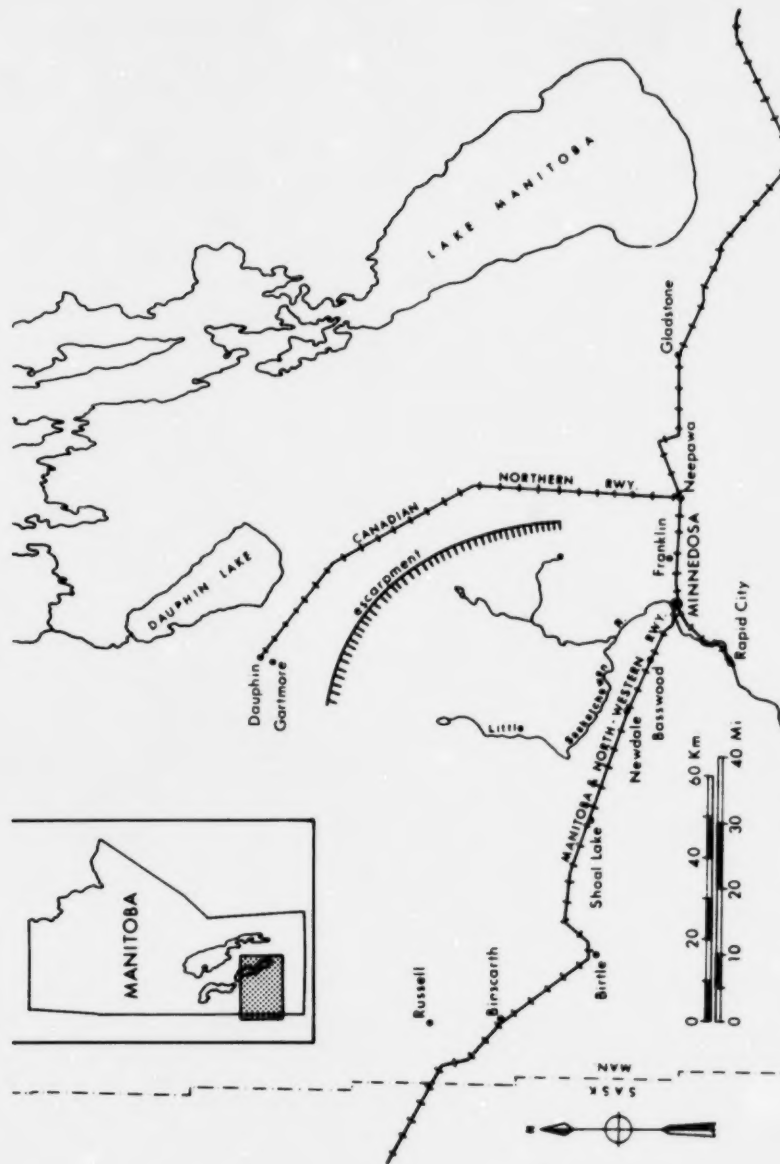
certain platted townsite and reap substantial profits from the sale of town lots. In many cases the railway circumvented these potential townsites and they remained forever undeveloped.⁵ Local speculators then either abandoned town promotion altogether or moved on to another prospective boomsite farther west. At Minnedosa, where the railway did give rise to a town, promoters promptly gathered in their profits, discarded the sham metropolitan aspirations that invariably accompanied pre-railway speculation, and embraced what might be called the urban bias. This was a set of realistic beliefs calculated to encourage sustained, rather than spectacular, economic and population growth through the acquisition and retention of limited urban functions. Town-builders sought basic functions such as hegemony over a sizable hinterland, local financial control, and industrial development. The degree to which they succeeded in harvesting the potential of their agricultural hinterland determined the growth stages through which their community passed, and thus its eventual position on the evolving urban gradient. In the contest for limited urban status on the prairies, comparative advantage⁶ was as much created as natural, and superior civic leadership was a vital key to its achievement.⁷

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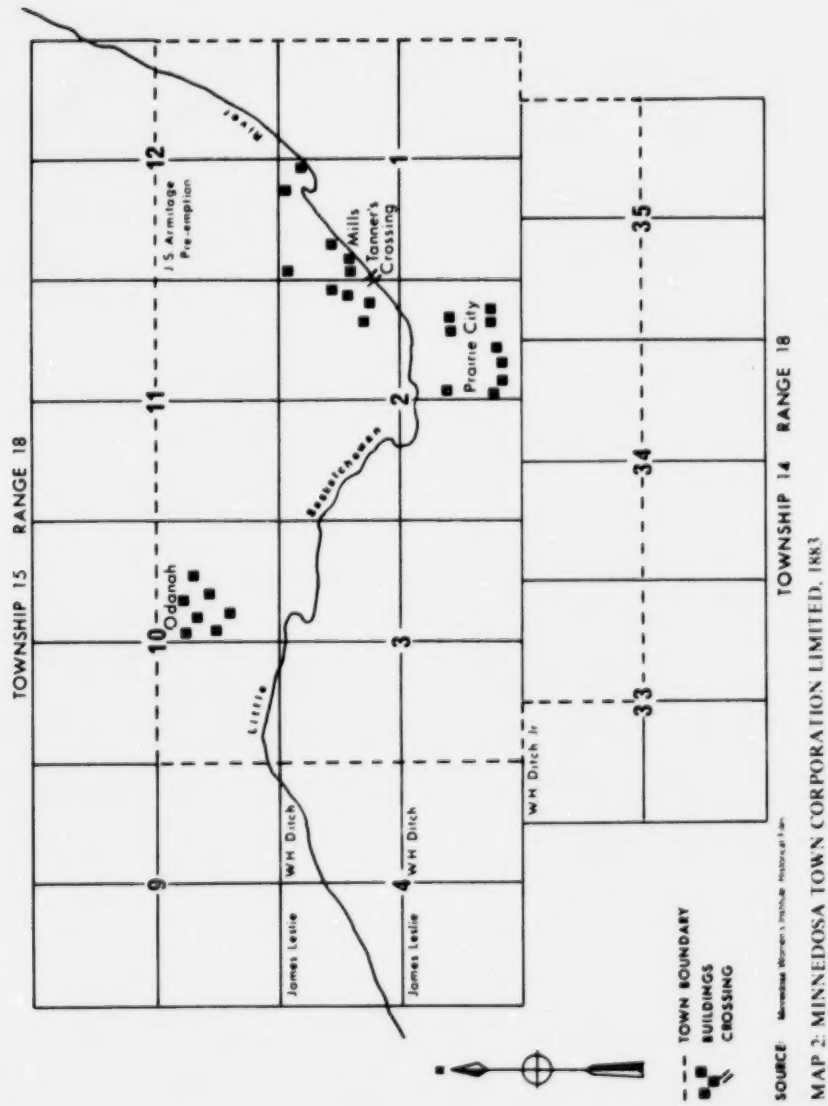
The most persistent theme in Minnedosa's development has been the "exploitation of perceived opportunities" which Oliver Knight has identified as common to all successful western American towns.⁸ One of the earliest and certainly the most striking expressions of this theme was pre-railway speculation to determine the location of townsites.

In the Little Saskatchewan Valley, where Minnedosa was later built (see Map 1), agricultural settlement began in 1870 when four half-breed families chose to farm there. One farmer, John Tanner, located near a convenient river ford on the Edmonton Trail, which served as a main western access route. The significance of Tanner's choice became clear by the mid-1870s when increased numbers of settlers passed through the valley bound for the southern slopes of Riding Mountain, the Birdtail River Valley, the Shoal Lake plains, and elsewhere. Being a shrewd man, Tanner built a toll ferry, and then a toll bridge, at the river crossing.⁹ At once the site became known as Tanner's Crossing.

By 1877 settlement of the Little Saskatchewan was sufficient to warrant establishment of a post office at the Crossing. The landrush began in earnest in the following year, and by February of 1879 over 1000 settlers, mainly Ontarians, poured into the area. Among them were merchants who appreciated the manner in which Tanner's crude bridge caught and directed the flow of westbound traffic, and within months a commercial settlement arose on the quarter section across



MAP 1: MINNEDOSA'S GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



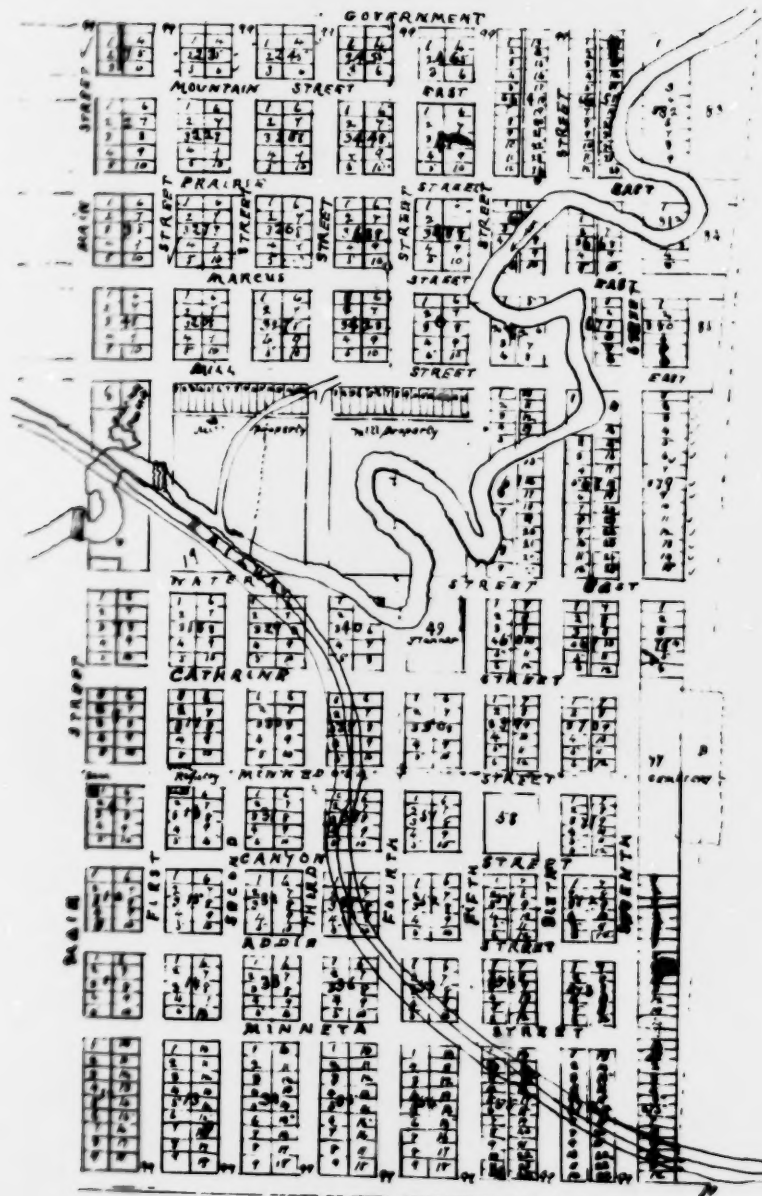
the river from Tanner's farm. In the spring of 1879 the incipient community consisted of a general store, a shoemaker, and a tailor. Soon another general store opened. The intention of the settlers to develop a permanent settlement was clear from the haste with which they erected a schoolhouse and a church.¹⁰ To enhance the site's attractiveness, local merchants co-operated in the construction of a more substantial bridge, an action which paid immediate dividends as the spring flood washed away every other valley bridge. In celebration of their commercial success, the merchants assembled and christened the settlement Prairie City. Their townsite was not without a rival, however, for less than two miles away another post office and a land titles office formed the nucleus of the village of Odanah (see Map 2). Commercially, it could offer incoming settlers little more than Prairie City, but the existence of postal facilities, a land claims office, and a sawmill all at one site gave Odanah a distinct advantage.

The spring of 1879 was an auspicious time for the residents of Odanah and Prairie City. Under pressure from the Manitoba government and the City of Winnipeg, the federal government changed the Canadian Pacific Railway route to run due west of Red River rather than northwesterly between the lakes.¹¹ According to surveyors' projections, the mainline would cross the Little Saskatchewan Valley at some point.¹² One projection had the line crossing at Rapid City, a British colony eighteen miles down the valley from Tanner's Crossing, and another placed it through Odanah. In the summer of 1879 surveyors laid out another possible route, which passed through Tanner's Crossing. These tempting prospects set off a land boom in the valley. Speculation was greatest at Odanah, where the Odanah Land Syndicate platted a 320-acre townsite, and then advertised the lots in Winnipeg newspapers.¹³ Similar activities, though on a smaller scale, took place at Prairie City, and the surrounding farmland rose in value.¹⁴ A heady frame of mind accompanied this speculation, and one valley visitor recorded that Odanah's Canadian Pacific Hotel was

to expand in the future to an immense size, where speculators and all men of business were to transact business, where tourists bent on doing the great N.W.T. were to halt for a breathing moment before starting for the Rocky Mts. & in short where travellers of all countries... were to find comfortable apartments on shortest notice, to be waited on by the most polished waiters & all at a moderate fare [of] say 5 dollars a day.¹⁵

With their bombastic rhetoric, local speculators had convinced valley settlers that Odanah was to become a metropolitan centre on the CPR mainline. It was an experience to be repeated again and again wherever the Canadian Pacific was rumored to run.

Despite the ascendancy of Odanah, the competition for townsite



MAP 3. ORIGINAL SURVEY OF THE MINNEDOSA TOWNSITE, 1879 (Armitage)

was far from finished. In the autumn of 1879 a miller's son from Port Colborne came to Tanner's Crossing, platted a new townsite with Tanner's consent (see Map 3), and laid plans for the construction of a combined grist and saw mill.¹⁶ J. S. Armitage was as confident and influential a town promoter as the valley settlers would ever see. His arrival affected many valley merchants, including the prominent J. D. Gillies and James Jermyn of Prairie City, who immediately began moving their lucrative businesses to the Crossing—or Minnedosa, as Armitage renamed it. Like Henry Yesler of Seattle, Armitage "offered a promise of permanence to the community. His sawmill would provide an important nucleus around which the aspiring 'upstart town' could grow."¹⁷

Armitage's mill changed the trading patterns of local settlers almost instantly. Instead of travelling thirty or more miles to the grist mills at Gladstone or Grand Valley, the settlers patronized Armitage. So successful was his enterprise that the mill had to be kept open around the clock to meet the demand for flour and lumber. All of this had an immediate impact on the valleyscape, and a newspaper correspondent soon recorded his view of

a large group of houses . . . their faces nicely whitewashed and in their midst a giant building of great magnificence—the combined grist and sawmill of Messrs. Armitage & Co. at Minnedosa. The mills are its great impetus, and the stores, which are of no ordinary degree, must of themselves draw a large amount of capital into the city. The houses and stores that I observed in the course of construction reflect no small amount of credit on the city.¹⁸

The promise of permanence was being fulfilled.

Armitage's actions accelerated the boom and some Odanah merchants actually switched townsite allegiance in their determination to be at the right location. Throughout the valley, a lumberjack from one of the Armitage camps wrote, it was "all a race for the dollar."¹⁹ The race ended as swiftly as it had begun, for in February 1881 the valley residents received word that the CPR would follow a more southerly route through Grand Valley.

The boldest speculators, those seeking immediate riches, abandoned the Little Saskatchewan district for Grand Valley, soon to be the town of Brandon.²⁰ Remaining was a core of settlers whose initial actions had betrayed their intention, as David Gagan has written, "to recapture Ontario's rural past and to escape a future compromised by the necessity to change in order to survive."²¹ These were not feckless speculators; they were people who believed that Minnedosa could become a prosperous rural market centre such as they desired. In a few months they had re-established the social institutions they had left behind in Ontario.²² They provided school facilities for their children, and petitioned the churches for resident clergy.



A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "J. S. Armitage". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Courtesy of Manitoba Archives

J. S. ARMITAGE, THE FOUNDER OF MINNEDOSA

As soon as finances permitted, they began construction of separate churches. The ubiquitous church groups followed. By 1881 a Masonic Lodge, an Orange Lodge, and a Literary and Debating Society were formed. Sporting activities, which had been spontaneous and informal at first, now became more structured and Minnedosa teams regularly squared off with those of Rapid City. Since Minnedosa was still in the North-West Territories, residents petitioned the Manitoba government to extend the boundary so that they might enjoy representation in the Legislature and the benefits of temperance legislation such as they had known in Ontario. In these and other social activities, Armitage and other successful businessmen took a leading role.²³

The growth of Minnedosa's business sector both reflected and enhanced local stability. By 1882 at least twenty-two firms had located there, mostly agriculture-related enterprises such as a farm implement dealer, a blacksmith, and a butcher.²⁴ But Minnedosa also possessed three lawyers, a doctor, a druggist, a private banker, an insurance agent, and a photographer. Besides the Armitage mill, the only industry was a brick-making plant. Spatially, the businesses were quite scattered, perhaps indicating an aversion to the floodplain on which Armitage had to locate his combined grist and sawmill.

Despite this encouraging growth town leaders had no illusions about the limitations to development imposed by the lack of a railway. With the CPR beyond reach, they began courting the Portage, Westbourne and North-Western. By 1882 its rails reached Gladstone, about forty miles to the east. Still unresolved was the route the railway would follow to the provincial border, which had been extended to its present western limit in 1881. There was no room in the valley for factionalism, since all settlers knew that a monetary bonus would be required to secure the railway and that only with the co-operation of the entire county could a large enough sum be raised. Nonetheless, renewed speculation proved a stronger force than common sense. Two homesteaders from near Minnedosa, W. H. Ditch and James Leslie, obtained a survey across their adjoining farms in exchange for the promise of a station site.²⁵ Similar inducements must have been offered by Odanah and Minnedosa speculators, since separate routes were soon projected through both centres. At Rapid City, which was within the county, speculators spurned the Portage, Westbourne and North-Western and pushed for bonusing of the planned Souris and Rocky Mountain line.²⁶ The Minnedosans, headed by Armitage, Gillies and Jermyn, consequently proposed three bonusing arrangements, each providing large sums to be used by Rapid City in bonusing the railway of its choice if a suitable county bonus could be agreed upon. Rapid City leaders refused these entreaties, and thus the enterprising Minnedosans tried to incorporate their town with the assistance of Odanah

residents. Again they met with opposition, for Odanah speculators were determined to regain their valley ascendancy. In spite of this, the Minnedosans secured enough popular support to incorporate their town in March 1883—an achievement which earned them increased county support and a considerable financial advantage in the railway struggle. Significantly, the town boundaries excluded the land held by Ditch and Leslie (see Map 2). Two weeks later county residents attended a public meeting to debate the proposition that Minnedosa would contribute \$30,000 to a railway bonus if the county would raise an additional \$100,000. None of the county representatives objected, and by December 1883 the trains of the Manitoba and North-Western, as the line was now known, were shunting in the Minnedosa yards.

After two hectic land booms in only four years, Minnedosa was established as a permanent community. During those years the risk and excitement of speculation overshadowed the more significant process of town-building. Determined pursuit of the urban bias by Armitage and his followers had built a community whose appearance and lifestyle led one observer to remark that "in no distant day the little town in the valley will seem more like an eastern town of Ontario than the newly discovered, just put together town on the Little Saskatchewan."²⁷ Such a development was precisely what Minnedosan town-builders envisioned.

II

The railway facilitated Minnedosa's growth as a market centre. Most of this growth was spontaneous, but town leaders exercised their political and financial power to maximize opportunities for growth. Beginning immediately after incorporation, they implemented a series of policies which, when taken together, amounted to a complete development strategy designed to capture as much hinterland trade as possible. Its elements included settlement of the hinterland, development of competitive marketing facilities, and encouragement of industrial growth. The planning and execution of this strategy was reasonably sound, and it succeeded to the extent that the real estate boom continued and local promoters were able to work in concert for the benefit of the community and their own bank accounts.

The fundamental task before the promoters was development of the hinterland. Settlement was still sparse and the civic leaders launched a vigorous campaign to put settlers on the vacant lands.²⁸ The commercially-dominated town council began issuing descriptive pamphlets extolling the virtues of the Little Saskatchewan district. An 1886 pamphlet, probably typical of most, read in part:

Free homesteads, railway and government lands and improved farms now awaiting settlement. All are well suited to mixed farm-

ing. Excellent soil, good water, abundance of hay, and fuel, and a healthy climate. The town of Minnedosa offers a good market and cheap provisions; is the most important grain and stock centre on the Manitoba and North Western Railway, and is within easy distance of Minnipeg [sic]...²⁹

This literature was distributed through the offices of the Allan Steamship line, the Canadian Pacific Railway, and presumably the Manitoba and North Western. N. D. Ennis, a real estate partner of Armitage and a colonizer himself, assisted matters by contacting his brother who worked as a passenger agent for the Allan line at Liverpool. Armitage may have attempted to direct settlement to the valley after his appointment as provincial immigration agent in 1887, for an angry correspondent wrote the following to the *Manitoba Free Press*:

As for the so-called immigration office opened by the Local Government opposite the railway station it would be better for Winnipeg that it had never been started at all, and especially as the new agent in charge of it this year virtually represents the Manitoba & Northwestern Railway, and sends everybody he can influence, as is well understood, to the northwest part of the Province, far away from here.³⁰

In fairness to Armitage, it must be said that his official correspondence reveals no geographical partiality.³¹ Local ministers also aided in the recruitment of settlers. In 1887 the Reverend Mark Jukes of the Church of England journeyed to England to lecture prospective settlers on the advantages of Manitoba in general and of the Minnedosa district in particular. His successor, F. R. Hole, continued this work and broadened its scope to include settlement of remittance men on local farms. In preparation for arriving settlers, the town councillors voted funds for the construction and maintenance of an immigration shed.

Hinterland settlement did not in itself guarantee urban growth, and so the councillors attempted to have all roads lead to Minnedosa. The *Winnipeg Commercial* stressed the importance of good communications links each spring and fall when it pointed out that town markets were depressed throughout the province because of poor road conditions.³² To ensure easy access to Minnedosa, the councillors petitioned all levels of government and even the Prime Minister for assistance in road construction and bridge and culvert installation.³³ When the councillors neglected this work, as they sometimes did, local farmers often seized the initiative. In 1885, for example, a road gang composed solely of farmers graded the eastern approach to town, an action which prompted local editor David Cannon to write that "this will show how thoroughly in earnest the people are about having communication with the town, for while the town council are debating where the trail shall be made and how round about it can be made,

the farmers make what they think is the most direct one themselves," adding that "the farmers also say that if the townspeople are determined to keep them shut out of Minnedosa they will start a store and blacksmith of their own at Bridge Creek [near Franklin] and then they need not come to town at all."³⁴ Such reminders of the town's precarious ties with the developing hinterland helped to make the councillors pay attention to these important matters.

Minnedosa developed as a market centre following the arrival of the Manitoba and North Western in 1883. While much of this growth was a natural consequence of rail service, it was to some extent expedited by the actions of the town council. Possibly even before the coming of the railway, the town had set aside a central plot of land for use as a market square. In the autumn of 1883 the councillors funded construction of a town hall, whose main floor was significantly reserved for postal facilities and the trading activities of local grain buyers.³⁵ Representatives of the Ogilvie Company of Montreal, the Nicholas Bawlf firm of Winnipeg, and several local traders met there regularly. The council repeatedly dealt with requests for elevator and grist milling bonuses. A typical debate of this nature occurred in 1884.³⁶ The issue was whether to grant a \$5000 bonus for the erection of a grist mill to replace Armitage's, which had closed down after passing into less capable hands. Councillor McDermott, a leading merchant, opposed the bonus on the grounds that, in view of Minnedosa's considerable expenditures for the railway and various civic improvements, it could ill afford such a giveaway. Councillor Armitage, representing the urban bias at its most aggressive, argued forcefully that bonusing was the only means of encouraging local growth. In this instance, the cautious councillors carried the day, suggesting that fiscal prudence was an important consideration even in this age of general expansion. In addition to grain buyers, the railway attracted livestock buyers to Minnedosa. Following the worthy example of one-time Minnedosan Pat Burns, several local businessmen entered the market in 1883. By 1886 Minnedosa was shipping hogs and sheep west, Highland cattle to Winnipeg, and hogs east to Montreal. A less lucrative trade developed in firewood by 1886, and Minnedosa became the supply centre for many points along the line.³⁷ After 1886 Minnedosa became an even greater grain-buying and distributing centre as two entrepreneurs started a brewery.

This trade made Minnedosa a sound investment town, and many agriculture-related firms such as implement dealers, blacksmiths, lumber yards, and livery stables located there. Of these the implement agencies had the highest capitalization.³⁸ In 1881 only a branch of the Winnipeg firm of E. Kelly was located at Minnedosa, but after the coming of the railway seven firms entered the field. Six were branches

of well-known Ontario firms, including the Harris, Massey, and Patterson concerns. By 1887 Minnedosa was the implement-distributing centre for smaller communities to the east, the southwest, and the northwest.³⁹

The steadily increasing volume of business transacted at Minnedosa naturally attracted financial institutions. At first the townspeople's needs were met by private bankers, who provided basic services on the strength of private capital reserves. Minnedosa's growing importance can be read in the fact that Wallis and Ramsay of Brandon closed their doors in 1883 in favor of Minnedosa.⁴⁰ Such private bankers were common in Manitoba until the turn of the century when the chartered banks began establishing their western branch networks. Local lawyers, and to a lesser extent real estate agents, handled other financial matters like life and fire insurance and mortgaging.⁴¹

Between 1883 and 1886 Minnedosa emerged as the pre-eminent market centre of northwestern Manitoba. The population had risen from 29 in 1879 to over 500 in 1886 (see Table I). In terms of business sector growth, Minnedosa ranked fifth among all prairie centres.⁴²

TABLE I

POPULATION OF MINNEDOSA, NEEPAWA AND
RAPID CITY, 1886-1906

	1886	1891	1901	1906
Minnedosa	549	614	1052	1299
Neepawa	255	774	1418	1895
Rapid City	258	543	529	738

SOURCES: *Census of Manitoba, 1886*; *Censuses of Canada, 1891 and 1901*; *Census of Prairie Provinces, 1906*.

The local taxable assessment had not decreased significantly in the three years of the boom, moving from an 1883 high of \$613,021 to an 1885 level of \$534,000.⁴³ In short, the real estate boom brought about by the railway had not yet run its course, and town leaders were doing everything in their power to keep it alive in the interests of town-building.

III

In the decade after 1886 Minnedosa's leaders were preoccupied with consolidating their economic grip on the hinterland. This was a sensible if problematic response to the slowdown of the provincial

economy, the falling off of immigration, and the end of the boom which occurred in late 1886. It was a task complicated by several factors. The first was the town's insolvency, which sharply curtailed spending and therefore industrial bonusing. Second, inter-town competition for the hinterland trade accelerated at the very time when Minnedosa's position was most vulnerable. And, finally, increased solidarity among local farmers made them more sensitive to economic inequities, particularly in the grain trade, and threatened at times to disrupt the existing trade patterns.

Minnedosa's financial collapse, which occurred in September of 1886, was the price to be paid for its success as a market centre. All of the elements which made Minnedosa the prosperous and pleasant community it was—the \$42,000 railway bonus (including \$12,000 worth of town lots), the \$11,000 school debentures, and the further \$20,000 worth of civic improvements such as the town hall, a new Main Street bridge, the immigration shed, and road construction—had been financed on the strength of grossly inflated land values. This did not become significant until 1886 when, chiefly as a result of the 1882 second homestead provisions which prompted a sudden westward exodus of settlers, the town's taxable assessment plunged to about \$200,000 from over \$534,000 the previous year.⁴⁴ The town corporation could not even meet the interest charges on its outstanding debentures. If one can judge by the letters column of the local newspaper, hardly anyone was outraged by the town's predicament. This silence seems to suggest that most citizens concurred with David Cannon when he wrote that "Minnedosa was suffering from a burden assumed that seemed necessary to its existence, and expenditures incurred for town improvements which in the early days of incorporation were thought of paramount importance."⁴⁵ This suggestion of community solidarity is corroborated by the fact that of the seven men elected to a Citizens' Committee to run the town's affairs, five were previous civic officials.⁴⁶

The Citizens' Committee immediately attempted to negotiate with the town's creditors. After nearly a year of discussion, several of the principal bondholders agreed to extend the payment time and to reduce the interest rate. During the next legislative session, the townspeople also appealed to the new Greenway administration and, after protracted delay, the Liberal Premier declared that he was unable to take remedial action until a commission had investigated the town's affairs. Minnedosans saw this as "punishment" for their strong Conservative bias, but they had no avenue of appeal.⁴⁷ By the end of 1888, more than two years after the resignation of the town council, the commission filed its report, recommending that the debt be scaled down to an affordable level and the interest charges reduced. As soon

as the new session began in February 1889, the government passed a bill permitting reorganization of the town corporation, with the unexpected and unappreciated proviso that a new official called the clerk and treasurer be appointed with full discretionary power over civic spending.⁴⁸ Under these terms the townspeople reconstituted their local government in August 1889.

The dissolution of town government in 1886, and the creation of the clerk and treasurer post two years later, were events detrimental to Minnedosa's development. To cope with the task of promoting the town in a time of mounting problems, a number of unco-ordinated booster groups arose. Local merchants organized a Board of Trade in 1887, and took responsibility for pamphleteering and sponsoring immigration lectures. Petitioning for road construction continued under the aegis of concerned citizens, and brought some reward in the building of the Minnedosa to Gartmore (Dauphin) road in 1889-90, which secured the northern part of the hinterland.⁴⁹ Sporadic citizen petitioning and newspaper editorializing was aimed at persuading the provincial government to construct the Hudson Bay Railway through Minnedosa, but to no avail.⁵⁰ With economy in mind, an inexpensive pre-collapse scheme of damming the Little Saskatchewan River to provide industrial water-power was revived, but failed for lack of financial support.⁵¹ Bonusing was of course out of the question because of the government's financial watchdog, and even necessary public improvements remained in abeyance.⁵² To make matters worse, a fire in 1887 devastated an entire block of the business district. Without the central authority and spending power of the town council, Minnedosa was unable to achieve any notable advancement during



Courtesy of Manitoba Archives

MINNEDOSA—ON MANITOBA AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY.
(Artist's sketch, 1888.)

the three-year interregnum. The business sector did not grow, and the property assessment edged only marginally upward.⁵³

At the same time the neighboring towns of Neepawa and Rapid City began to challenge Minnedosa's position as the chief market centre in the area. Because Neepawa developed after the railway went through, it did not incur the heavy bonusing expenditures of pre-railway places such as Minnedosa.⁵⁴ Furthermore, good local crop yields, particularly in 1885, resulted in substantial business growth at Neepawa despite the factionalism which plagued its leadership.⁵⁵ Rapid City began its recovery when a branchline from Minnedosa reached it in 1886, an event that coincided with the settlement of its largely unoccupied hinterland. Local leaders diversified the business sector by bonusing a grist mill and a woollen mill. This bold action brought a sudden financial crisis that only a quick tax sale overcame.⁵⁶ In 1886 Neepawa had a population of 255 and Rapid City 258, compared with Minnedosa's 514. By 1891 Neepawa had surpassed Minnedosa in size, and Rapid City had significantly closed the gap (see Table I). In 1890 their business communities were evenly matched at about 30 firms each. In terms of postal money order receipts, the most useful economic index available, 1890 appears to have been a year of marginal differences in business volume.⁵⁷ That Minnedosans were well aware of the crisis overtaking them is apparent from Cannon's 1887 editorial about the Board of Trade:

There are alot [sic] of business interests that would be properly attended to by such a body that are now allowed to take care of themselves much to the detriment of the town, and the competition between adjoining towns is so keen that it becomes absolutely necessary that united action of all businessmen of Minnedosa should be at once taken to preserve its present and assure its future prosperity.⁵⁸

But united action, even if it had been achieved, would have been ineffectual because the town had neither financial reserves nor borrowing power.

Minnedosa's economic predicament was made worse by the growing fickleness of the local farm community. During the town's first decade, relations with district farmers had been cordial, as reflected by the representation of farmers on the town council for several years (see Table II). The hinterland also comprised a population very similar in ethnic and religious backgrounds to that of Minnedosa (see Table III), and constant social intercourse took place in the fraternal societies and informal organizations of the town (see Table IV), as well as across the less sociable divide of the store counter. This intermingling continued in decreasing degree down to about 1900, but it is important to note that these amiable relations were more or less confined to those farmers nearest town.⁵⁹ As one ventured

TABLE II

MINNEDOSA TOWN COUNCIL COMPOSITION,
1883-1905

	Terms Served		No. of Members	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Professionals	16	10.9	8	14.0
Independent Proprietors	109	74.2	42	73.7
Farmers	8	5.4	2	3.5
Employees	9	6.1	2	3.5
Unidentified	5	3.4	3	5.3
Totals	147	100	57	100

SOURCES: *Minnedosa Tribune* and *Henderson's Directories*.

TABLE III

SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF MINNEDOSA AND
MARQUETTE CENSUS DIVISIONS

	Protestants		Anglo-Saxon/Celtic	
	1886	1901	1886	1901
Minnedosa	87.3%	82.8%	93.3%	86.9%
Marquette	83.2%	68.9%	87.2%	72.2%

SOURCES: *Census of Manitoba, 1886*; *Census of Canada, 1901*.

TABLE IV

MEMBERSHIP IN MINNEDOSA SOCIETIES
AND ORGANIZATIONS, 1886-1896

	Masonic Lodge			Oddfellows			Agricultural Society		
	1886	1891	1896	1886	1891	1896	1886	1891	1896
Farmers	17%	17%	—	10%	19%	25%	70%	60%	67%
Townsppeople	58%	67%	83%	80%	75%	69%	30%	30%	37%
Unknown	25%	17%	17%	10%	6%	6%	—	10%	—

SOURCES: *Minnedosa Tribune* and *Henderson's Directories*.

farther from Minnedosa, the familiarity bred of proximity naturally faded and it was those farmers at the fringe of Minnedosa's hinterland who occasionally strayed to other market centres such as Neepawa and Rapid City.

The fickleness of the rural community was related to the development of a distinctively agrarian institutional base. By 1890 over seventy per cent of the rural school districts had been formed, and the remainder followed in the next decade. By 1900 almost every rural district had its own church.⁶⁰ Rural post offices multiplied yearly until by 1900 there were more than a dozen in the surrounding countryside.⁶¹ No sooner had the countryside been divided into farm districts focusing on these institutions than an agrarian reform philosophy began the process of melding them into a more cohesive, more powerful, agrarian society. In early 1884 a group of farmers east of Minnedosa flirted with the idea of organizing a Grange to protest Neepawa's abolition of credit purchasing. Little came of this, and the malcontents may have been absorbed by the Manitoba and North-West Farmers' Union formed during the same spring.⁶² Despite considerable support within both the local hinterland and the province, the Union failed to become an important force for change. Not until 1891 did a comparable focus for farm grievance arise in the form of the Patrons of Industry. Rapid City became the centre of this movement, with publisher Henry Clay of the local *Marquette Reporter* as a vociferous proponent of farmers' rights. At times 2,000 farmers attended stump meetings in the area to hear prominent Patron speakers.⁶³

Local farmers soon began to take a more aggressive stand on marketing issues, particularly on the buying of grain. In 1884 the *Winnipeg Commercial* reported that farmers at Minnedosa were withholding large quantities of grain from the market in order to raise prices. In 1890 local farmers protested the imposition of butter inspection fees and credit limits by Minnedosa's new regulatory Retail Dealers' Association.⁶⁴ In 1897 the *Minnedosa Tribune* observed:

it is learned that farmers whose natural market is Minnedosa, who say that they prefer to come to Minnedosa, and that if the difference [in grain prices] was not more than a couple of cents they would never dream of going anywhere else, are again drawing to the markets where they were paid prices and received weights satisfactory to them. We are informed that as high as 86 cents was paid in Franklin on Monday of this week, and 84 cents at Neepawa the same day, while the highest price paid here at any time this fall was 79 cents.⁶⁵

The impact of these price differences is suggested by the grain deliveries to each point during that year. Neepawa received 500,000 bushels, Franklin 150,000 and Minnedosa 150,000.⁶⁶ Obviously a few extra miles meant little to farmers concerned with obtaining more advantageous selling conditions.

Seriously hurt by the aftermath of the boom, Minnedosa lost its position as the chief market centre of northwestern Manitoba. Financial embroilment, the rising fortunes of rival centres, and the discrimination of local farmers all contributed to the town's relatively slow growth rate. Despite a marked disinclination to admit the obvious, Minnedosa residents would henceforth have to be content with incremental urban growth.

IV

Minnedosa's loss of regional ascendancy had little or no impact on local adherence to the urban bias. Across the prairies comparable communities were just beginning to grapple with the problems that always accompany urban growth, and in like manner Minnedosan leaders found themselves confronted by public demands for better living conditions and more utilities. Rising farm fortunes and alleviation of much of the debt burden permitted the leaders to deal with these new issues in a satisfactory manner. During the decade that straddled the old and new centuries, Minnedosa crossed the threshold from identification with the agrarian hinterland to identification with major urban centres.

The revival of Minnedosa's prospects began shortly after reorganization of the town corporation. By 1891 the *Colonist* could report that \$20,000 worth of new buildings had been erected there, many of which were undoubtedly houses, for the population shot up from 614 in 1891 to 1052 by 1901. The number of businesses rose as well to over 50 by 1900. Correspondingly, the property assessment increased, reaching more than \$306,000 in 1898.⁶⁷ This brought change in the townscape, as the log and rough lumber houses of the early settlement period gave way to more substantial homes of frame construction with neat clapboard exteriors, brick, and, in a few cases, stone. More houses than ever before must have been painted, judging from the increased number of painters in town.⁶⁸ On Main Street the false-fronted look began to disappear as merchants celebrated rising profits by building new brick or stone stores, offices, and warehouses. True to the fashion of the period, most were in the Romanesque style. These buildings represented more than increasing wealth: they stood for a renewed commitment to the town and its future.⁶⁹

In part, the town's economic position was the result of favorable changes to the 1889 debt legislation. In 1895 town leaders secured the right to have the clerk and treasurer negotiate with the creditors to see if a settlement could be reached, but without result. The burden continued as before until the election of a Conservative provincial government in 1899, which resulted in the government's assumption of \$18,000 of the debt three years later.⁷⁰ More important than this amelioration of debt was the new farm prosperity. In six rural municipi-

palities which formed most of Minnedosa's hinterland, there was an increase of over thirty-four per cent in the number of resident farmers between 1896 and 1904.⁷¹ The average cultivated acreage doubled, and the overall taxable assessment rose by almost twenty-three per cent. Clearly the developing wheat boom was permitting expansion of local farm operations.

TABLE V

POSTAL MONEY ORDER RECEIPTS: MINNEDOSA, NEEPAWA, AND
RAPID CITY, 1886-1917

Year	Minnedosa	Neepawa	Rapid City
1886	\$ 10,355	\$ 1,924	\$ 4,420
1887	9,170	4,454	4,090
1888	11,043	6,676	7,161
1889	25,510	40,756	22,582
1890	18,742	19,933	13,110
1891	17,349	33,609	18,290
1892	17,277	25,121	15,074
1893	17,226	21,888	12,632
1894	16,508	20,957	12,428
1895	19,890	36,226	11,794
1896	16,924	38,292	11,561
1897	17,948	39,972	12,398
1898	20,499	41,874	11,249
1899	19,627	32,178	15,326
1900	20,215	38,985	17,729
1901	19,971	31,513	19,393
1902	26,937	49,110	29,141
1903	33,832	64,269	32,868
1904	35,317	61,928	35,922
1905	37,975	57,950	41,041
1906	30,264	37,299	29,768
1907	47,075	60,479	31,957
1908	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1909	57,501	57,819	41,700
1910	57,228	60,479	31,957
1911	59,747	53,906	41,335
1912	83,288	73,481	46,673
1913	103,551	91,837	44,527
1914	97,024	90,293	41,313
1915	96,746	75,923	42,423
1916	101,330	92,011	39,700
1917	109,699	98,614	44,498

SOURCE: *Postmaster-Generals Annual Reports*, 1887-1918.

TABLE VI

NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION: MINNEDOSA,
NEEPAWA, AND RAPID CITY, 1899-1911

	1899	1901	1907	1911
Minnedosa	500	500	885	1100
Neepawa	1827	1974	2897	2944
Rapid City	500	500	750	500

SOURCE: *McKim's Directory*.

TABLE VII

TAXABLE PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS: MINNEDOSA,
NEEPAWA, AND RAPID CITY, 1896-1911

	1896	1904	1906	1907	1909	1911
Minnedosa	\$293,776	\$488,555	\$566,345	\$623,977	\$566,475	\$607,035
Neepawa	379,640	779,627	971,985	978,175	813,200	1,072,551
Rapid City	n.a.	321,649	409,040	1,119,136*	453,413	444,142

*This is probably a printing error.

SOURCE: Sessional Papers of Manitoba, Municipal Commissioner's Reports.

Resolution of the hinterland context occurred simultaneously. Neepawa, now connected to the Canadian Northern as well as the Manitoba and North-Western (taken over by the CPR in 1900), consolidated its hold on the smaller centres and their environs to the north. Minnedosa maintained hegemony over a hinterland bent on a southeast-northwest axis along the Manitoba and North-Western line. Both Minnedosa and Neepawa had suffered from the founding of Dauphin north of Riding Mountain in 1896, which drew off the far northern trade. Rapid City, with only a branch line connection to outside markets and a concentration on internationally non-competitive industries such as a woollen mill and a pottery factory, began to decline once more. Population figures, postal money order receipts, newspaper circulation figures, and property assessments all indicate Neepawa was maintaining its lead as the chief market centre, while Minnedosa remained the only serious contender for the position (see Tables V, VI, and VII). It is worth noting that the trade areas of these centres appear to have decreased in size by 1906, suggesting perhaps that geographical reach now mattered less than the revenues generated within each farm district.

As trading patterns became more fixed and therefore less worrisome, Minnedosans focused more attention on the quality of town life. The actions of the town council indicate that public health was a subject of increasing concern. In 1894 they appointed a local doctor to be the town's health officer and decided to enforce the vaccination of all school-age children. In the following year they provided funds for the installation of a public pump in the centre of town which appeased those citizens who believed the size of the population justified the cost of installing a system of waterworks. Soon a scavenger routinely cleaned the streets, a slaughter house too close to the town's centre was relocated upon orders from the council, and residents planned the construction of a hospital. The council moved cautiously because of the debt problem, but it did satisfy most public demands for improvements of this nature.

The urban bias now had an aesthetic side as well. Some citizens called for the establishment of an "Improvement Society," the local equivalent of the nation's nascent urban reform movement. David Cannon added his editorial voice to the debate and suggested that towns of Minnedosa's size required "what are termed 'breathing spaces,' or parks, and if Minnedosa does not need [them] now she will in the not distant future."⁷² While the councillors did not heed his suggestion, they did sponsor the planting of trees along the main streets.

Influenced by developments in larger urban centres, Minnedosa leaders acquired the latest technological utilities for their constituents. The Bell Telephone Company approached the council in 1893 for permission to install a local exchange. The council immediately passed the necessary by-laws, but installations did not actually commence until 1900. By 1908 most businesses and homes had telephone service and were part of a long-distance connection that took in Winnipeg, Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Rapid City and other centres.

Electrical lighting came to Minnedosa by a different route. Local entrepreneurs attempted to enter this investment field in 1902 by forming a joint-stock company to develop hydro-electrical power on the Little Saskatchewan River. Corporate investment had become the favored vehicle of development because it permitted high capitalization with limited liability. The scheme failed, however, for lack of citizen support.⁷³ Consequently, the town council hired a Winnipeg contractor to install the system, and by 1906 the townspeople were supplied with electrical lighting.

This preoccupation with civic improvements signalled the urban maturity of Minnedosans. Conditioned by circumstances in larger centres, the citizenry demanded more of its elected representatives in the form of urban appurtenances and amenities. The reliability of

hinterland revenues was an important factor in this change of attitude, but at bottom it reflected the new belief that material growth was only as good as its social rewards. Progress, as locally defined, had assumed an important qualitative dimension.

V

To understand the development of limited urban centres one must look to the settlement period when community leaders had unparalleled opportunities to affect the direction and pace of local change. The social climate encouraged pursuit of the urban bias, while the malleability of circumstances was particularly suited to those with entrepreneurial talents. The degree to which local leaders comprehended and pursued urban functions helped determine the stages of growth through which the community passed, and thus its eventual urban status.

By 1906 Minnedosa had passed through three distinct stages of urban growth, and had entered upon a fourth. The first and most critical stage, covering the years 1879 to 1883, focused on what W. L. Morton has called the selection of site.⁷⁴ The founding of Minnedosa may be more convincingly attributed to skilful manipulation of existing circumstances by local entrepreneurs than to locational advantage or the beneficent impact of the National Policy. Between 1883 and 1886 Minnedosa became established as a competitive farm marketing centre. The railway was principally responsible for this development, as it transformed the local economy from subsistence to export. External events began to direct local development as never before, but town leaders continued to mould the situation to their advantage whenever possible. From 1886 to 1896 hinterland consolidation dominated local aspirations, as internal collapse halted business expansion and forced Minnedosans to exploit the potential of existing urban functions. Finally, as the trade patterns of the farm community took shape around 1900, town leaders initiated policies designed to temper the growth ethic with a greater measure of humaneness. These stages of growth, set within different time frames, could undoubtedly be discovered in other limited urban centres across the prairies.

Fundamentally, town-building was a social process in which local leaders periodically re-evaluated and revised development policies in light of rapidly changing external circumstances in order to satisfy the community's material aims. Viewed from their perspective, town-building was less a speculative gamble than a shrewd investment.

NOTES

- ¹ The best articulation of this rural-urban imbalance is J. E. Rea, "Images of the West," in David J. Bercuson, ed., *Western Perspectives I: Papers of the Western Canadian Studies Conference, 1973* (Toronto, 1974), pp. 4-9. Summaries of the work being done in Canadian urban history seldom refer to advances in the study of small towns, simply because little work has yet been done in this field. See, for example, the following recent articles: Gilbert A. Stelter, "A Sense of Time and Place: The Historian's Approach to Canada's Urban Past," in Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 420-41; Stelter, "Current Research in Canadian Urban History," *Urban History Review*, No. 3-75 (February 1976), pp. 27-36; Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, "Urban History Comes of Age: A Review of Current Research," *City Magazine*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (September-October, 1977), pp. 22-36; and Stelter, "Urban History in Canada," *The History and Social Science Teacher*, Vol. 14 (Spring 1979), pp. 185-94.
- ² Among the better examples of community system studies are N. L. Whetten, "The Social and Economic Structure of the Trade Center in the Canadian Prairie Provinces with Special Reference to Its Changes, 1910-1930," Ph.D. Thesis (Harvard University, 1932), and Carle C. Zimmerman and Gary Moneo, *The Prairie Community System* (Ottawa, 1971). See also: Gary Moneo, "The Major Trade Centre Communities of Saskatchewan, 1936-1966," M.A. Thesis (University of Calgary, 1970); Harold A. Rendall, "The Trade Areas of Camrose, Wetaskiwin, and Ponoka," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1962); Leo F. Kristjanson, *Population Trends in the Incorporated Centres of Saskatchewan, 1926-1961* (Saskatoon, 1963); and Gerald Hodge, "The Prediction of Trade Centre Viability in the Great Plains," Ph.D. Thesis (M.I.T., 1965).
- ³ I am indebted to Robert R. Dykstra, *The Cattle Towns: A Social History of the Kansas Cattle Trading Centers, 1867-1885* (New York, 1971), for this idea. See pp. 3-4.
- ⁴ Michael Frisch, *Town into City: Springfield, Massachusetts, and the Meaning of Community, 1840-1880* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), p. 5.
- ⁵ Examples are cited in Paul Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies, 1871-1916," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. VIII (May 1975), pp. 77-101.
- ⁶ For an explanation of what is meant by comparative advantage, see W. L. Morton, "The Significance of Site in the Settlement of the American and Canadian Wests," *Agricultural History*, Vol. 25 (1951), pp. 97-104.
- ⁷ The role of civic leadership is discussed in Alan F. J. Artibise, "Boosterism and the Development of Prairie Cities, 1871-1913," in this volume.
- ⁸ Oliver Knight, "Toward an Understanding of the Western Town," *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. IV (January 1973), pp. 31-32.
- ⁹ For a description of the first bridge see James Trow, *Manitoba and the North West Territories* (Toronto, 1970; facsimile of the 1878 edition), pp. 38-39.
- ¹⁰ *Manitoba Free Press*, 15 February 1879, 1 May 1879.
- ¹¹ The CPR route change is discussed in the following: Pierre Berton, *The Last Spike: The Great Railway, 1881-1885* (Toronto, 1971), pp. 11-23; Alan F. J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal, 1975), Chapter 4; and R. C. Bellan, "Rails Across the Red: Selkirk or Winnipeg," *Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba Transactions*, Series III, No. 17 (1964), pp. 69-77.
- ¹² Sir Sandford Fleming, *Report and Documents in Reference to the Canadian Pacific Railway, 1880* (Ottawa, 1880), p. 246.
- ¹³ *Manitoba Free Press*, 19 April 1880.
- ¹⁴ In August of 1880 a farmer who owned land adjacent to Odanah sold a half section for \$10,000. Canadian Pacific lands rose from four to five dollars per acre at the same time. See *Manitoba Free Press*, 11 August 1880.
- ¹⁵ Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Correspondence of William Lothian, 23 April 1881.
- ¹⁶ *Manitoba Free Press*, 13 November 1879.
- ¹⁷ John R. Finger, "The Seattle Spirit, 1851-1893," *Journal of the West*, Vol. 13 (July 1974), p. 30.
- ¹⁸ *Manitoba Free Press*, 20 September 1880.
- ¹⁹ Lothian Correspondence, 24 January 1880.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 23 April 1881.
- ²¹ David Gagan, "Land, Population, and Social Change: The 'Critical Years' in Rural Canada West," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. LIX (September 1978), p. 315.
- ²² For further information on the establishment of social institutions at Minnedosa, see the author's M.A. Thesis, "Country Town: The History of Minnedosa, Manitoba, 1879-1922" (University of Manitoba, 1978).
- ²³ Armitage, for example, founded the Literary and Debating Society, donated land for the construction of a Methodist church and became one of its first officers and the leader of the Sunday School Movement; he was also active in various sporting events. His involvement in the community was typical rather than exceptional.

- ²⁴ The information in this paragraph is taken from *Henderson's Directory of Manitoba, the city of Winnipeg and towns of Manitoba* (Winnipeg, 1882), and from "Facts Collected and Presented in Story and Pageant by the Women's Institute at Minnedosa, October 7th, 1937" (copy in author's possession).
- ²⁵ Dr. William John Rose, "Early Minnedosa: The Crossing, The Town, and the Railway," *Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba Transactions*, Series III, No. 15 (1960), p. 71.
- ²⁶ *Manitoba Free Press*, 28 August 1882 and 31 August 1882.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 4 April 1881.
- ²⁸ The 1886 census indicates that there were only 1.1 persons per square mile in the census division in which Minnedosa was situated, suggesting that in 1883 settlement was not far advanced.
- ²⁹ Quoted in *The Winnipeg Sun Midsummer Holiday Number*, 1888, p. 44.
- ³⁰ This letter to the *Free Press* was reprinted in the *Minnedosa Tribune*, 15 April 1887.
- ³¹ See Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Manitoba Department of Agriculture and Immigration, Letter Books of J. S. Armitage, Provincial Immigration Agent, 1887-1889.
- ³² See, for example, *The Commercial*, Vol. I, No. 8 (21 November 1882), and Vol. II, No. 29 (1 April 1884).
- ³³ The instances when such petitioning was done are too numerous to mention. For an example of an appeal from the town council to the provincial government, see *Minnedosa Tribune*, 5 February 1891. For appeals to the Dominion government, see *ibid.*, 22 August 1889 and 27 March 1890. An example of the less frequent petitioning by citizens can be found in *ibid.*, 19 February 1886.
- ³⁴ *Minnedosa Tribune*, 16 October 1885.
- ³⁵ *The Commercial*, Vol. I, No. 52 (25 September 1883).
- ³⁶ *Minnedosa Tribune*, 15 February 1884.
- ³⁷ *The Emigrant*, Vol. I, No. 4 (1 September 1886); *ibid.*, Vol. I, No. 7 (1 December 1886).
- ³⁸ Dun and Bradstreet Reference Books.
- ³⁹ *Minnedosa Tribune*, 22 July 1887.
- ⁴⁰ *The Commercial*, Vol. I, No. 31 (1 May 1883).
- ⁴¹ *Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory of British Columbia, N.W.T., Manitoba, and Northwest Ontario, 1889*. Three local lawyers handled the life, fire, and loan business of nineteen different companies in 1889.
- ⁴² *The Emigrant*, Vol. I, No. 1 (1 June 1886).
- ⁴³ Rose, "Early Minnedosa," p. 79.
- ⁴⁴ Minnedosa's taxable assessment of 1886 is taken from the report of the commissioners who investigated the town's affairs in 1888, and is approximate only. See Minnedosa Town Commissioners' Report, December 1888 (copy in author's possession).
- ⁴⁵ *Minnedosa Tribune*, 24 September 1886.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 17 September 1886.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 13 September 1888.
- ⁴⁸ *Statutes of Manitoba*, 52 Vic., C. 40.
- ⁴⁹ Construction of this road had been a council objective for at least the previous half decade. Gartmore, which later became incorporated into the town of Dauphin, was at this point a focus of settlement in the Lake Dauphin district.
- ⁵⁰ When plans were first laid for the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway, it was to be built west of Winnipeg around the west side of Lake Manitoba, and thence to the Bay.
- ⁵¹ *Minnedosa Tribune*, 2 July 1886.
- ⁵² The situation was so bad that in 1887 a local banker paid for vital bridge repairs on the understanding that the cost would later be deducted from his taxes. See *Minnedosa Tribune*, 9 September 1887.
- ⁵³ According to *The Commercial* and the Dun and Bradstreet Reference Books, Minnedosa's business sector remained stable at about 30 firms. The property assessment reached \$271,131 in 1889, compared with a figure of around \$200,000 in 1886. See Rose, "Early Minnedosa," p. 79.
- ⁵⁴ *The Commercial*, Vol. 4, No. 47 (17 August 1886). The popular myth, which I mistakenly perpetuated in my thesis, is that Neepawa and Rapid City both became insolvent around 1886. This contention, espoused by Tom Naylor in his *The History of Canadian Business, 1867-1914*, Vol. I (Toronto, 1975), p. 244, is incorrect. Naylor based his claim on a list in the *Monetary Times* of 1 July 1887, p. 11, to which he inexplicably added the town of Neepawa. This published list of 1887 was based on the Manitoba government's Act respecting Municipal Indebtedness (*Statutes of Manitoba*, 50 Vic., C. 39), which provided arrangements for easing of debt burdens which might be employed in the event of municipal insolvency and cited Emerson, West Lynne, Morris, Portage la Prairie, Gladstone, Neepawa, Minnedosa, and Rapid City as towns in which the provisions might be needed. As it turned out, Neepawa never did become insolvent and Rapid City narrowly escaped insolvency by holding a tax sale to raise the interest on its outstanding debentures.
- ⁵⁵ *The Commercial*, Vol. 4, No. 47 (17 August 1886).

- ⁷⁰ Rapid City had suffered greatly from the second homestead provisions introduced in 1882, which permitted homesteaders who had presumably failed in their first attempt at farming to settle another homestead. Local homesteaders mortgaged their first farms and moved west to purchase again, in the hope of selling the first farm at a profit. This resulted in rural depopulation and the non-payment of taxes. See *The Commercial*, Vol. 4, No. 47 (17 August 1886), and *ibid.*, Vol. 5, No. 17 (17 January 1887).
- ⁷¹ *The Colonist*, No. 47 (April 1890). The postal receipts figures are based on an analysis of the amounts given in the *Annual Reports* of the Postmaster General. See Table V for the actual figures.
- ⁷² *Minnedosa Tribune*, 16 September 1887.
- ⁷³ The problem was, of course, one of transportation. Because of this, it is best to conceive the hinterland as comprising a series of concentric circles. Only those farmers within the first circle, having a diameter of perhaps ten miles, regularly participated in town affairs.
- ⁷⁴ See the author's M.A. Thesis, pp. 128-29.
- ⁷⁵ The exact number is unavailable because until 1899 the Postmaster General's *Annual Report* listed only accounting post offices. As nearly as can be determined, there were six rural post offices opened in the 1880s, four in the 1890s, and one in 1904. Another is known to have existed, but its opening date has not been determined.
- ⁷⁶ *Minnedosa Tribune*, 18 January 1884. A Little Saskatchewan local with about 30 members was formed in the rural municipality of Saskatchewan in 1884. See Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Manitoba and North West Farmers' Union, Scrapbook, 1883-1884, speech by John A. Brown, p. 130.
- ⁷⁷ Brian A. McCutcheon, "The Patrons of Industry in Manitoba, 1890-1898," in Donald Swainson, ed., *Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces* (Toronto, 1970), p. 149 and Louis Aubrey Wood, *A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada* (first reprint, Toronto, 1975), p. 125. See also *Grain Growers' Guide*, Vol. IX, No. 9 (21 March 1916), p. 21.
- ⁷⁸ *The Commercial*, Vol. II, No. 20 (12 February 1884); *Minnedosa Tribune*, 20 March 1880.
- ⁷⁹ *Minnedosa Tribune*, 14 October 1897.
- ⁸⁰ *The Western World*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (January 1898).
- ⁸¹ *The Colonist*, No. 58 (March 1891); Dun and Bradstreet Reference Books, and Rose, "Early Minnedosa," p. 79.
- ⁸² Dun and Bradstreet Reference Books.
- ⁸³ For a parallel, see Peter Moogk, *Building a House in New France: An Account of the Perplexities of Client and Craftsman in Early Canada* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 120-21, where it is suggested that the transition from wood to stone structures indicated a commitment to the land.
- ⁸⁴ *Statutes of Manitoba*, 1-2 Edw., C. 26. For an explanation of the government's role in assuming part of the debt, see the report of the Minnedosa Debenture Settlement presented to the town council by Mayor Butchart, 5 April 1911 (copy in author's possession).
- ⁸⁵ There were actually eight rural municipalities whose boundaries corresponded to the area defined by newspaper correspondents as Minnedosa's hinterland in 1906, but statistics are not extant for Minto R.M. and are inconsistent for Rosedale R.M. Consequently, these two municipalities have been excluded from the following calculations. See *Sessional Papers of Manitoba*, Municipal Commissioner's Reports of 1896 and 1904.
- ⁸⁶ *Minnedosa Tribune*, 21 May 1896.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 15 September 1904.
- ⁸⁸ Morton, "The Significance of Site."

6. BOOSTING THE SMALL PRAIRIE TOWN, 1904-1931: AN EXAMPLE FROM SOUTHERN ALBERTA

PAUL VOISEY

Now Carmangay is bound to be,
A city great and grand;
The wonder of Alberta,
The admired of every land.¹

Boosterism — the campaign to stimulate economic and population growth by advertising, lobbying, and offering incentives to development — is now a well recognized aspect of the history of large prairie cities.² But George Babbitt inhabited the small town as surely as the city, and he laboured just as mightily to promote his community.³ Although the circumstances of prairie settlement bred the booster mentality in even the smallest places, slim resources often led to a variety of promotional techniques unlike those of the city. Boosterism and the messages it broadcast expressed the attitudes and aspirations of prairie settlers, and although it failed to create large cities, boosterism shaped small towns in a variety of important, if often unanticipated, ways.

To explore these themes from small town sources, the case study seems appropriate, and attention here focuses on several towns and hamlets along the Canadian Pacific Railway's Kipp-Aldersyde line in southern Alberta.⁴ These places shared major characteristics with many prairie towns. Together with a generous minority of other groups, English-speaking Protestants from Ontario and the United States planted them during the 1896-1914 settlement boom. Situated half-way between Calgary and Lethbridge, they sprouted neither in the shadow of the metropolis, nor on the isolated fringe of settlement. The vast semi-arid region of dark brown soils and gently rolling treeless plains nurtured their growth. None grew to populations greater than 1,000 by 1931.⁵

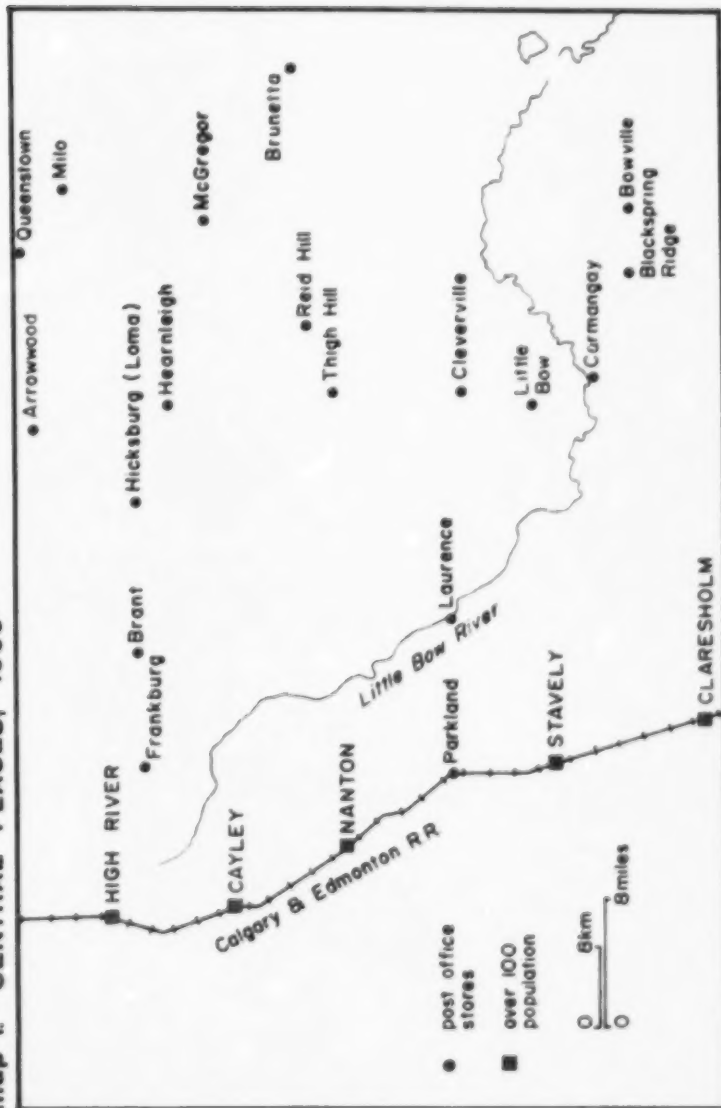
Although boosterism gripped many communities in North America, its intensity on the Canadian prairies cannot be understood without a brief description of how town founding in the area related to railways and rural settlement. In 1892 the Calgary and Edmonton Railway stretched south to Ft. Macleod, stringing new townsites

together, but few settlers came until the new century. Like most pioneers, they crowded close to the railway, but by 1904 unclaimed homesteads lay ten miles east of the line. On a frontier with no pretense of self-sufficiency, the outlying settlers relied on the railway towns of High River, Nanton, and Claresholm to ship their wheat and supply goods and services for its production. The towns also provided the necessities of daily life. Since the distant trip by horse-drawn wagon was time-consuming, uncomfortable, and expensive, usually necessitating an overnight stay in a hotel, travellers to town often purchased supplies for neighbours. This practice encouraged some pioneers to open stores on their homesteads. To attract customers, they applied as postmasters, an early act of boosterism that sometimes required political connections. Country hamlets often evolved, offering specialized if limited services (see Map 1).

Hamlet formation was not always haphazard. Although scarcely a stream, the Little Bow River had cut a deep, wide ravine in the prairie skin. At one point it narrowed sharply. As a civil engineer and a speculator, C. W. Carman of Chicago reasoned that if a railway came to the area, here was the place to build a high level bridge.⁶ In 1904 he bought twenty-three railway sections, launched the bonanza Carmangay Farm Company, and laid out the townsite of Carmangay. He acquired a post office, built a store, attracted merchants and tradesmen.⁷ To the north, E. E. Thompson, a much travelled frontier developer, also started a huge farm in 1904; in 1905 he surveyed a townsite and built the Brant Store. He hired six men and added an implement agency, seed grain business, and a warehouse. Thompson demonstrated that a country store could make money. He reportedly earned \$150,000 in ten years.⁸

Many hamlets aspired to greatness. "Our future is before us," thundered a Thigh Hill man, "watch our smoke." Another settler described Brant as a "hustling little burg."⁹ A glittering future depended entirely on steel rails, and some hamlets arose solely in anticipation of the railway: "... it was rumoured that the Grand Trunk was to run through the Bowville district," recalled one pioneer, "consequently a village sprang up..."¹⁰ As rumours mounted, hamlet dwellers began pestering railway companies with inquiries and petitions. The companies responded with announcements and surveys; in 1909 even Premier Rutherford confirmed that four lines would traverse the area.¹¹ Only the CPR would actually build a line, and as usual the company intended to by-pass existing hamlets, building its own townsites on land it already owned or would acquire, and sharing real estate profits with no one. And where the new line joined the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, the CPR would infuriate High River by making the connection several miles north where a new town could rise on company lands.¹²

map 1: CENTRAL PLACES, 1909



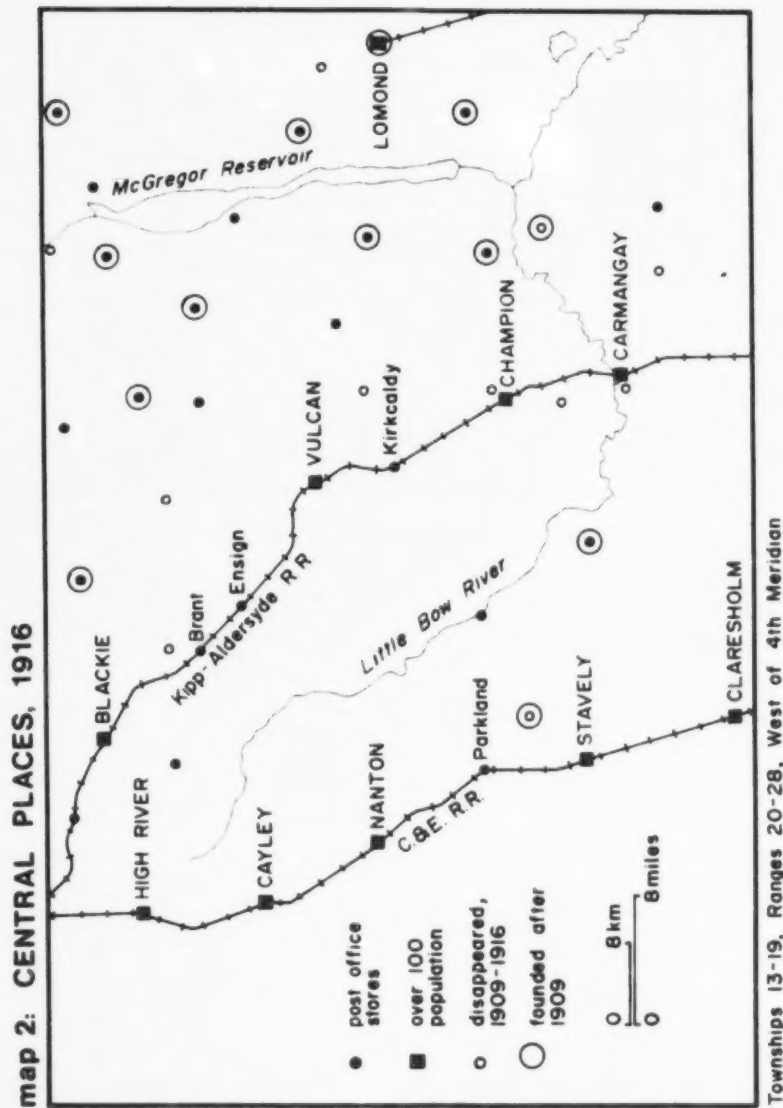
Townships 13-19, Ranges 20-28, West of 4th Meridian

Carmanagay proved a special case, for, as Carman hoped, the CPR wished to cross the river valley at his settlement. They agreed, however, to survey a new townsite one-half mile from the existing hamlet where both parties could participate in the sale of lots by auction.¹³ Although the sale was not until July of 1909, in May merchants at the old site prepared to move; they hoisted buildings on skids and piled lumber near the townsite.¹⁴ They learned that outsiders planned to buy lots: businessmen from the Calgary and Edmonton towns, national companies (including three banks), and speculators galore.¹⁵ One thousand buyers swarmed to the auction and paid \$79,125 for 435 lots in less than three hours. Many bought six or more lots; scarcely a soul bought only one.¹⁶

Schemers complicated the sale of the new Champion townsite, one and one-half miles from the hamlet of Cleverville. The CPR first tried to buy farm land from the original settler through a third party, but when Martin Clever guessed the real buyer and asked a high price, the company bought from another homesteader.¹⁷ With fixed prices established for the town lots, everyone wanted to head the line on sale day, especially when warnings arrived that the Carmanagay gang planned to buy all the lots and resell them to the Cleverville merchants. The merchants commissioned two men to purchase property for everyone in the hamlet: "... to head off the speculators," remembered one agent, "my brother and I were delegated to hold down first place at the door of the office where lots were to be sold, which we did from Sunday night until Tuesday morning. ..." Even so, some lots resold at 100 per cent profit within an hour. Immediately after the sale, steam engines and draft horses lugged the entire village of Cleverville onto the new townsite.¹⁸

Manoeuvring to obtain right-of-way and townsites cheaply, the CPR gave little thought to the practical spacing of towns. Ten miles separate some; only three and one-half separate others (see Map 2). The company ensured Kirkcaldy's stillbirth by placing it on Vulcan's doorstep and temporarily withholding its lots from sale. While the sale of the new Brant townsite, over two miles from the old Brant settlement, triggered a three-day line-up, the close spacing of three new townsites caused the old hamlet to split in several directions. Of 216 surveyed lots, only forty-nine sold; and at nearby Ensign, only nine of ninety. Blackie, the third townsite, lured most of the buyers. Farmers later argued before the Board of Railway Commissioners that building Ensign close to Brant, but far from Vulcan, accounted for the chaotic distribution of various railway services.¹⁹

Why did the sale of small townsites on a mere branch line generate so much excitement? Much of western Canada experienced rapid settlement; the sudden cancellation of grazing leases—combined with



a teeming multitude of newly-arrived settlers, and an expanding railway network to move them—initiated stampedes into new districts. Just as the sudden flow of settlement had sparked a boom in the Calgary and Edmonton Railway towns, so now did the new Kipp-Aldersyde line promise to launch a new land rush to the uninhabited east. Although pioneers brought along carloads of “settlers’ effects,” they still needed supplies and equipment to build their homesteads. In addition, the construction of the railway, a high level bridge, the giant grain elevators, a huge reservoir that would irrigate land far to the southeast, and the towns themselves, all called for legions of workmen. Those who could quickly provide the goods and services for these immense undertakings stood to reap great profits. Anticipating a boom, speculators competed with local settlers to boost land prices. CPR townsites typically featured two wide streets for commercial purposes: one parallel to the railway siding for grain elevators, warehouses, and station; and another for retail businesses. Merchants scrambled for possession of these limited properties, especially the coveted corner lots.

The boom at the new townsites between 1909 and 1913 confirmed local expectations. Established farmers realigned their trade allegiance, and new settlers poured into the area. The railway gang arrived, 150 to 250 strong. Digging commenced on the Lake McGregor reservoir; one merchant sold \$40,000 worth of goods at the site in one month. Carpenters descended on the townsites. At Carmangay forty buildings rose within two weeks of the townsite sale. At Champion twenty men laboured on the new hotel alone.²⁰ Still there remained a shortage of workers. Speculators, merchants, and salesmen huddled in tents and shacks and packed the new hotels and boarding houses. The Carmangay hotel reported huge profits, and the first houses completed were rented at fantastic prices.²¹

Fired by a real boom, real estate speculation accelerated. Whereas lots averaged \$138 each at the Vulcan townsite sale in 1910, by 1912 they fetched \$400 to \$700.²² By 1914, twenty per cent of the assessed lots in Champion and Vulcan traded outside the area, some as far away as Oregon and New England.²³ At Carmangay, C. W. Carman, the CPR, and Toronto speculators built sub-divisions larger in area than the original townsite. Nearby farmers parcelled land into small acreages. Purchased on the advice of friends and relatives in the area, or through Chicago or Toronto agents, the town lots of Carmangay soon traded sight unseen in four nations, across all nine provinces, and in fourteen American states.²⁴ In one year, E. W. Horne of Toronto sold 119 lots throughout England, Quebec, and Ontario. By 1914 Carmangay residents owned less than eight per cent of the town lots, and the CPR less than five per cent. Seventy-three property titles found

their way to England and Scotland. Ontario investors owned 840 lots, about sixty-one per cent of all town land.²⁵

It is not surprising that Carmangay became the darling of the Kipp-Aldersyde line. Like many prairie towns, it temporarily enjoyed the status of "head of steel," and so commanded a huge trade area. Unlike the town lots in Vulcan and Champion, those in Carmangay were marketed by promoters with metropolitan connections, and CPR participation in the sub-division game aroused suspicions that Carmangay awaited some secret destiny, especially when insiders like R. B. Bennett bought property.²⁶

* * *

Given the circumstances of frontier town founding, the inspiration of a real boom, and an even greater speculative one, it is easy to understand how town residents became avid boosters. Many had just arrived from the American Midwest and east Washington state where town promotion had always been conspicuous, and they realized the need for effective organization. The Carmangay Board of Trade actually convened before the sale of the townsite, and Boards of Trade sprang up instantly in Champion and Vulcan. Their first goal was municipal incorporation. Carmangay became a village in 1910 and pressed on to town status a year later. Vulcan attempted to by-pass village status altogether, but in early 1912 lacked the necessary population of 400.²⁷ The Province soon raised the requirement to 700, forcing Vulcan to wait until 1921. Champion also settled reluctantly for village status, but old Brant had been so splintered by the arrival of steel that new Brant could not attain even that lowly title. Lacking the basic device of town promotion, it soon faded into obscurity.

Limited manpower and financial impotency forced small towns to modify the promotional techniques used by cities. Town and Village Councils, for example, quickly assumed the functions normally performed by Boards of Trade.²⁸ Like other urban places in the West, they lobbied corporations and governments for specific facilities and tempted them with free sites and tax incentives. But because the lure of large cash subsidies lay beyond their means, Councils bargained coyly with developers.²⁹ A serious, but less expensive, problem was that the towns were new, small, and unknown. Hence advertising soon dominated booster activity, a preoccupation symbolized by the Board of Trade slogan "You'll Hear From Champion." Like many cities, the towns published promotional literature, mailed it across the continent, and deposited it in hotels and train stations. Occasionally, they distributed literature aggressively. Vulcan merchants once sent an automobile driver on a two-month trip to Chicago to hand out brochures, give lectures, and answer questions. "Vulcan was not a new name to any of

them...." he triumphantly reported, no doubt with more enthusiasm than accuracy.³⁰

Distributing literature was expensive, however, and towns often preferred to advertise in city newspapers, particularly in special editions intended for wide circulation. But local weekly newspapers soon became the most common form of printed propaganda. From inception, advertisers moulded them into instruments of town promotion, inflicting considerable injury on journalistic ideals. Indeed, special editions scarcely resembled newspapers at all. It might be supposed that such efforts fizzled; surely no one read the local press save local residents. But many distant speculators had purchased farm land and town lots in the area, and they followed land prices by subscribing to local papers. Surprisingly, acquaintances of distant land owners often wrote inquiries to the newspapers about investment opportunities. The Carmangay *Sun* (1910), the *Vulcan Review* (1912, later the *Advocate*), and the *Champion Spokesman* (1914, later the *Chronicle*) together printed about 1,200 to 1,500 copies a week throughout the 1910s; perhaps hundreds reached readers beyond the area and in many parts of the continent.³¹

The boosters also relied on distant speculators to provide free advertising. They applauded literary efforts by the Toronto-based Western Canada Real Estate Company and the Equity Trust and Loan Company to advertise Carmangay, Champion, and Kirkcaldy real estate.³² As well, the boosters expected individual efforts by residents to advertise the area. Large land owners like C. W. Carman, with business connections in Chicago and Grand Rapids, could always be counted on to spread Carmangay's fame, but as the local press relentlessly repeated, boosterism was everyone's responsibility and everyone should write the folks back home praising their town. W. J. Morton, a photographer in Vulcan, happily designed post cards for the purpose. The newspapers back home actually published many of these letters. Rev. J. S. Ainslie, for example, promoted Carmangay real estate in articles about the Canadian West published by his home town church newspaper, the *Congregationalist and Christian World* of Chicago.³³ To impress visitors, town and village councils sponsored campaigns encouraging everyone to clean, landscape, paint, and repair their property; and local newspapers always urged residents to "talk up the town" to strangers. There is no indication that local residents lacked sincerity in recommending their towns; they did not wish to cheat their friends and relatives, and many did profit in real estate, although more often in farm land than town lots.

Local organizations or events like sports days and fairs also served the boosters' purpose. Organizers of the 1915 Vulcan Stampede hoped to draw attention to the town by offering contestants large cash prizes.

arranging for excursion trains to the event, and advertising heavily. Similarly, the Carmangay Fair sought to convince agricultural editors of the "truly wonderfully rich and teeming... possibilities" of the district. Circuses, chautauquas, and other spectacles also provided merchants with plenty of temporary customers, and they eagerly solicited all travelling entertainments. Promotional exhibits might also be organized at special events in other towns. Carmangay considered its Agricultural Society's participation at Dry Farming Congresses, held in various cities of the North American West in the 1910s, a model of effective boosting. And if a band could accompany such exhibits, it was "one of the best advertisements a town can have." Small towns often subsidized their bands for travelling in the cause of boosterism.³⁴

Semi-professional baseball excited the boosters most of all. Imported by American settlers, baseball became a major social activity and a popular device for gambling, but everyone recognized its potential for town promotion as well. Would Vulcan "... stay on the map as a real live baseball town or sink into oblivion?" fretted the editorials each spring. Some years a town might forgo a season rather than risk humiliation. To generate publicity, the teams had to be good enough to win tournaments throughout the province if not beyond. Since many western towns hoped to spread fame this way, the task was onerous.³⁵ Nonetheless, Carmangay, Vulcan, and especially Champion all assembled teams of sufficient quality to win many provincial tournaments, and even to attract major league scouts. The teams consisted of talented local residents, some with semi-professional experience, and a core of recruited professionals. Good players could always be pirated from opposing teams, but managers cast their nets widely. Vulcan's first loss of 1919 prompted a mission to Portland, Oregon that yielded three new players.³⁶ Although a pitcher might be paid \$175 a month, most imports received about \$75. Teams offered other compensations, perhaps a part-time job or free room and board.³⁷ Lesser stars received jobs but no baseball salary. Teams paid players out of gate receipts and donations, which for a three-game series might amount to \$1,000. Many players supplemented their income by gambling on the outcome of games (which inevitably led to trouble), by playing for more than one team, and by playing in the United States during the winter. Clubs hired some players by the season, others by the game, but the expense became so staggering that teams soon recruited only pitchers, and ultimately collapsed altogether.³⁸

The boosters searched endlessly for any gimmick to distinguish their town from countless others. Ralph "Slim" Moorehouse, a grain hauler well known for linking horses and wagons in long caravans, arrived at the Vulcan grain elevators one day in 1922 driving a team of

thirty horses pulling eight wagons of wheat. A reporter met him. "... we record an event," pronounced the *Advocate*, "that in type and pictures will give us publicity all over America and even in the Old Country." The newspaper printed and mailed thousands of post cards, and requests for the story poured in from magazines and calendar makers. "If you can accommodate me in this connection," wrote Robert Stead, popular novelist and publicity director for the CPR, "I think we can put over some good publicity for the Vulcan district." When he arranged the publication of photographs in twenty-six British newspapers, the *Advocate* boasted that he had "made Vulcan as well known almost as New York."³⁹ In the quest for recognition, no tactic was too tasteless to exploit, no straw too thin to grasp.

If the tactics of small town boosterism sometimes displayed originality, its messages did not. Typically, they emphasized agricultural opportunities. Magnified claims about rich soil producing huge yields and a balmy climate blessed with abundant rainfall and "practically immune from hail and frost" appeared with monotonous regularity. In an area of the prairies most prone to violent fluctuations in climate and weather, one literary tract boldly stated that visitors "are agreeably surprised to find that the extremes of climate to which they have been accustomed are not known here." Even an admittedly disastrous drought year like 1910 could be twisted to advantage, for as the boosters pointed out, it was a tribute to the district that Carmangay grew and prospered anyway. But while Town Council polished the image of an agricultural Eden in public, it fretted in private about the problem of soil-drifting and the embarrassing image it might present.⁴⁰

Promoting agricultural settlement could achieve little. Most land west of the tracks had been settled before the birth of the towns, while land to the east filled in quickly. Not only was settlement almost wholly complete by the time the towns began promoting it, but the trend towards fewer and larger farms was already underway. This disturbing fact turned town boosters into fanatical advocates of mixed farming. The intensive development of small farms promised to support a great population, and a wider variety of agricultural products might stabilize town incomes, which fluctuated with the price of wheat, and would create new opportunities for food processing industries. The towns all struggled to secure irrigation systems, meat packing plants, flax mills, flour mills, and dairies.⁴¹

Unhappily aware of the limitations imposed on local agriculture, boosters exaggerated the importance of other resources. Small coal deposits scattered throughout the area and mined for fuel by homesteaders, became in their minds the foundation for great transportation and industrial centres. Small natural gas strikes fired local imagination more effectively than they would ever fire local

industry: "... there is sufficient natural gas at Champion," bragged the Board of Trade, "to drive the wheels of a hundred factories." With access to cheap fuel, Carmangay expected manufacturers to flock to town to exploit "some of the finest and most valuable fire-clay, iron, stone and alluvial deposits found anywhere in Canada."⁴²

Railways remained crucial to all resource and industrial development, and newspapers predicted that new lines would magically benefit their town alone. The completion of the Kipp and Aldersyde stimulated local thirst for more lines, and railway companies continually announced plans and commissioned surveys; some even secured charters and purchased right-of-way for lines that would never materialize. Each town relentlessly petitioned railways for the prize of divisional point.⁴³

Increasingly, roads commanded attention too, for farmers had to be brought to town quickly and conveniently. The automobile, which farmers purchased in great numbers during the profitable war years, promised to destroy the tyranny of time and distance that horse and wagon imposed on farmers. It inspired plans in 1919 for a provincial highway between Calgary and Lethbridge, and the towns mustered as much lobbying energy as they had for railway construction. "Vulcan wants and must have this highway," protested the *Advocate* when it learned that the proposed route would by-pass the town. Council successfully solicited the support of the rural Municipal District of Royal and secured the road.⁴⁴ In addition to roads and railways, boosters also expected telephone lines to reinforce commercial ties with the countryside, and the towns raced to link the most farmers to their local exchanges.⁴⁵

* * *

According to its own treasured yardstick, population growth, the booster campaign did not succeed (see Table I). The most ambitious schemes flagrantly ignored reality. Small, politically unimportant towns on secondary transportation routes with nothing special to offer could be safely ignored by government institutions in search of a home. Thus the Province scarcely acknowledged Carmangay's bid for the southern Agricultural School.⁴⁶ Coal added almost nothing to economic or population growth because of its low quantity and poor quality. It remained a convenient source of cheap home fuel for farmers, but served no industrial purpose. By 1936 the eight mines in the M.D. of Harmony employed no more than forty-five, a figure inflated by the winter employment of local farmers. Of fifty-two mines opened up to 1967, only seventeen produced coal for more than ten years; eight had closed by 1915.⁴⁷ Natural gas development awaited very recent advances in technology and market price. The value of other minerals was always a flight of booster fancy.

TABLE I
TOWN POPULATION GROWTH, 1909-1936

Year	Carmangay	Champion	Vulcan
1909	190		
1910	400-465		
1911	287		
1912	460	220	187-275
1913	420-450	200-250	275-325
1914	400-450	210-325	300-348
1915	400	250	400
1916	332	235	415
1921	300	338	641
1926	290	287	775
1931	279	310	803
1936	234	328	869

SOURCES: *Census of Canada, 1911, 1921, 1931; Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1916, 1926, 1936*, and many municipal censuses and estimates.

Soil remained the only natural resource feasible for exploitation, and the towns remained inextricably bound to agriculture. While close analysis of economic and spatial relations with the hinterland is beyond the purpose of this chapter, some special problems can be outlined briefly. Inevitably urban growth stabilized or even fell after the completion of the immense task of building facilities for agricultural production, storage, and transportation. This complex, expensive infrastructure, however, depended on numerous mixed farms supporting a densely populated countryside. Instead, in a pattern typical of the dark brown soil zone, farms specialized in wheat, grew large in size and fewer in number. This trend doomed most plans for food processing industries. Carmangay's determination to have a creamery in spite of the lack of dairy cows in the area resulted in an anemic business that operated at a loss under the ownership of private interests, then the Board of Trade, and finally the United Farmers of Alberta local before closing forever. A lack of water hindered Vulcan and Champion. No stable manufacturing enterprise that exported beyond the area appeared until a small flour mill opened at Vulcan in 1925.⁴⁸

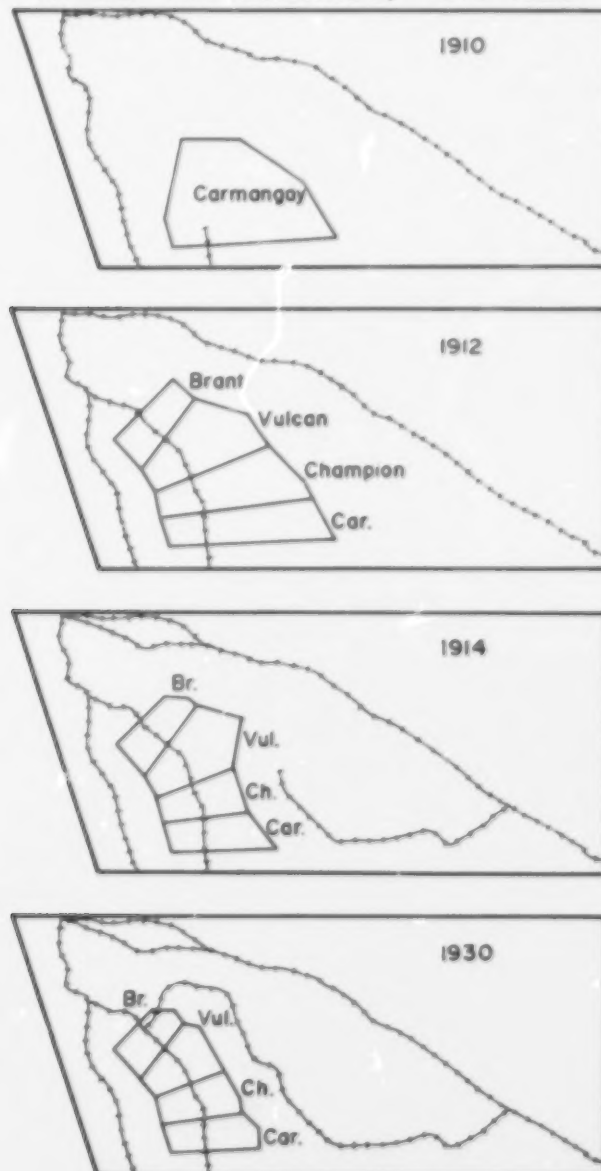
But the transportation network most often handcuffed towns with no resources save land. In southern Alberta its vast triangular skeleton had already hardened prior to 1900 with primary joints at Calgary, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat. Though scarcely more than small towns themselves, without competitors they mushroomed instantly under the impact of twentieth century settlement. Filling in the transportation skeleton further benefited these centres, and it proved

impossible for new railway towns to overtake them. Indeed new lines actually carved away small town hinterlands instead of expanding them. Just as the building of the Kipp and Aldersyde in 1910 robbed older Calgary and Edmonton Railway towns of trade territory, so too did its extension north strip Carmangay of its "head of steel" advantage, creating the new rivals of Vulcan and Champion. In 1914 the extension of a line from Suffield gave birth to the railhead of Lomond twenty-five miles to the east, another competitor much feared by Carmangay merchants. Further extensions of this line in 1925 and 1930 created a string of new towns that stole even more trade from the Kipp and Aldersyde line (see Map 3). Instead of applauding new railway construction, the towns soon waged a losing battle to retain all their own rail services.⁴⁹ The scarcity of transportation routes, rather than their abundance, often briefly awarded to frontier towns a metropolitan influence far exceeding that of similar-sized places in settled regions.

Carmangay, Champion, and Vulcan did manage to capture and hold important if shrinking trade hinterlands, but their relative influence shifted. Business services in Carmangay fell from fifty-six in 1914, to forty-five by 1928; while at Vulcan and Champion they rose from fifty-six to 114, and from thirty-six to sixty-five respectively.⁵⁰ These businesses offered farmers and townspeople a basic supply of indispensable goods and services that changed little in nature for decades, except that automobile-related businesses replaced horse-related ones. Otherwise, each townsman who moved away left a particular shop or trade that could be filled by a newcomer. In each town, businesses directly related to agriculture consistently accounted for one-third to one-half of the total. Instead of selling goods, most businesses primarily sold services, whether of an agricultural, professional, personal, or craft nature. In short, all three centres retained the status among prairie places described as "independent towns" rather than "dependent villages."⁵¹ Although topography and transportation routes distorted somewhat the idealized pattern of central place theory, the density of the rural population, the number of services it required, the frequency of its needs, and the distances it had to travel all largely determined the size, spacing, and number of urban places in the area.⁵²

Contrary to popular image, the prairie town did not settle complacently into the role of agricultural service centre following the collapse of its lofty ambitions. Of necessity, railway towns struggled constantly for the trade of the immediate hinterland. The building of the Kipp and Aldersyde had eliminated all country stores close to the line, but by stimulating new settlement further east, it ensured the viability of distant hamlets and even gave rise to new ones (see Map 3).

**map 3: IDEALIZED VIEW OF CHANGES IN
TOWN TRADE HINTERLANDS, 1910-1930**



All across the prairies, an expanding railway network perpetually rearranged, but failed to destroy, the constellation of country hamlets. By 1936 places with less than ten businesses still made up seventy per cent of all central places in the Prairie Provinces, a proportion they had held since 1910. Railway or not, farmers seemed reluctant to venture beyond five miles for everyday items, and as late as 1931, only thirty-one per cent of the farmers in Census Division Four (which included Vulcan, Champion, and Carmangay) lived within five miles of a railway town; thirty-five per cent actually resided more than ten miles away. The general store remained by far the most decentralized business on the prairies.⁵³

As for the goods and services available only at railways, farmers were hardly the captive customers of the closest town as observers of mid-western America once claimed. Although geographers often described a "zone of indifference" where farmers equidistant from towns might patronize one as readily as another, studies of the American mid-west and the Prairie Provinces have shown that farmers often shopped at places far distant from the closest town. Vulcan farmers behaved no differently. Like other towns throughout North America, those on the Kipp and Aldersyde learned that automobiles and improved roads not only lured farmers from further afield, but also whisked customers formerly bound to the town away to other centres.⁵⁴ The highway that brought Carmangay within less than an hour of downtown Lethbridge hastened its decline, whereas Vulcan's position halfway between Calgary and Lethbridge ensured at least slow growth. After World War II, Vulcan's strategic location in terms of automobile driving time allowed it to benefit simultaneously from the centralization of local government functions and the decentralization of the provincial ones. Overlapping and shifting trade zones explain the bitter rivalry between adjacent towns. When High River published literature boasting of huge wheat yields, Vulcan accused its competitor of using "our farmers" to bolster "their claims."⁵⁵

By shopping in different towns, farmers sought not only lower prices and greater selection but also liberal credit and convenient business hours. These issues sparked conflict between towns, and sometimes within them. Cheating repeatedly undermined agreements between merchants to restrict credit to thirty days, even in 1922 when all the merchants on the Kipp-Aldersyde line agreed to co-operate. "Cash only" policies announced by Vulcan and Carmangay merchants collapsed in 1913, and again in 1916. Since the first country merchants usually opened stores in their homes, they willingly conducted business at all hours. During the building boom, everyone remained open until nine or ten o'clock each night. The weary merchants soon pleaded for rest. During the war, merchants in most towns agreed to close at 6:30 p.m. except on Saturday, and at noon on Wednesdays in the summer.

But whenever a special event brought farmers to town, many ignored the rules. The towns apparently failed to enforce by-laws in accordance with the Provincial Early Closing Act until 1930, and even then they granted exceptions at harvest time.⁵⁶

When the drudgery of winter grain hauling began, farmers more readily yielded to the tyranny of distance and almost always shipped through the closest railway town. Indeed farmers believed there should be more towns, and in 1927 the M.D. of Harmony alarmed Champion and Carmangay by petitioning the CPR for grain loading facilities between the two towns. Carmangay suffered a greater shock the next year when one of their own merchants persuaded the CPR and four elevator companies to establish the siding of Peacock only four miles south of town.⁵⁷

In the battle for trade, topographical problems easily overcome by cities profoundly affected the small town. Carmangay bragged that the water supply of the Little Bow River gave her an advantage over rivals, but worried that grain haulers north of the valley would not risk its steep grades when they could travel to Champion on level ground. The town could not afford a high level bridge. The CPR and the elevator companies ignored pleas for facilities on the north side so that farmers might unload before crossing the ravine to shop. Vulcan rejoiced that the building of the McGregor reservoir brought money to town, but feared that the lake "would shut the Brunetta district off from Vulcan." Similarly, a great fire would hardly slow the growth of a major city, but the flames that periodically enveloped the small town often resulted in rebuilding on a smaller scale.⁵⁸

Besides competition from country stores and neighbouring towns, places as far off as Toronto invaded Main Street. No sooner did the new towns arise than the railway that created them began delivering a wide range of mail order goods: clothing, furniture, hardware, even non-perishable foodstuffs. In harmony with small towns across the continent, local merchants cried out in protest. Throughout the "Be Loyal to Your Own Community" campaign of 1914 and the "Trade at Home" campaign of 1922, Vulcan merchants chronicled the sins of the mail order houses: they demanded cash in advance and sold inferior goods that could not be inspected beforehand, delivery took weeks and exchanges even longer, and the goods actually cost more after adding the expense of postage and handling. By contrast, local merchants offered credit and prompt service. The press depicted "Bob Simpson" and "Tim Eaton" as community wreckers. By draining money out of the small town without returning a penny in local taxes or charitable contributions, they threatened local prosperity and even land values.⁵⁹

Pedlars also invaded the small town, from door to door salesmen

to itinerant wholesalers who sold box cars of goods at cut rate prices. Champion Council protested in 1913 that resident merchants who built the community, extended credit, and paid taxes, could not survive in the face of such unfair competition. Merchants sternly warned the public against them, and town councils begged the Province for power to tax them out of existence. Automobiles and improved roads soon gave the travelling salesman even greater mobility. In 1929 the new highway brought a tremendous increase in mobile services from Calgary and Lethbridge. When city trucking and bus companies forced local draymen out of business, the towns appealed again to the Province for protection.⁶⁰

* * *

Although small towns failed to become cities, and scarcely averted decline after 1913, boosterism nonetheless represented more than a transparent chapter in western town history. It both shaped and revealed pioneer attitudes in a variety of ways. Most often, it expressed the unbridled optimism of frontiers generally and western Canada in particular. Once train service began, Vulcan expected to advance "with the strides of a young Chicago." Boosters predicted that Champion would "rank among the chief cities of the West." "The evident intention of the people of Carmangay is to found a Permanent, Large, and Prosperous City," reported one pamphlet, and the *Sun* added that "The least optimistic among us expect that Carmangay will double its population in a year. . . ."⁶¹

But did the boosters believe their own propaganda? Certainly in the towns' first bustling years optimism did not seem misplaced, yet many realized the boom would not last forever. By 1913 many merchants had already "made their harvest," sold out, and moved away. Of the 125 businessmen listed in directories and tax rolls along a forty-mile stretch of the Kipp and Aldersyde in 1914, seventy-four per cent were replaced by newcomers by 1920, a turnover rate that slowed significantly thereafter.⁶² Just as many of the first businessmen came from towns on the Calgary and Edmonton line, they came in turn to new towns on other new lines from the Kipp and Aldersyde. The false front store suited perfectly the mood of the western merchant; an imposing facade of stability masked transitory urges. But if optimism failed to graft itself forever to one particular town, it remained always strong; should the boom falter in one place, it would surely revive wherever railway construction created new townsites.

Promotional literature also described the kind of society pioneers hoped to create, for they naturally advertised features that they believed most likely to attract newcomers. A 1910 promotional spread emphasized the orderly character of Carmangay social life, the safety of its streets, and the sobriety of its citizens. Only a respectable

population could provide the social environment necessary for progress and prosperity. "The people of Vulcan are energetic, and a splendid type of townspeople generally, and the men at the head of it are men of ability and shrewd in business," ran a typical claim. Such men would surely build a community that need not suffer from any comparison. Promotional literature never failed to exalt the progressive educational, religious, social, and recreational facilities of the towns; it linked social order and respectability with material progress to convince newcomers that their investments would be secure and their families safe and happy in a frontier town.⁶³ Although boosters scorned the wild west frontier in favour of civilized images, they did not wish to transplant eastern communities intact. Along the Kipp and Aldersyde, townspeople believed that entrenched interests and the inert weight of tradition handicapped the eastern town. Only on a frontier could the best features of settled communities be nurtured, while the worst might be pruned away.⁶⁴

The booster campaign also poses a paradox. If small communities idealized their wholesome, pastoral surroundings and decried the evils of urban life, as many claim, then why did they struggle valiantly to become large cities? The desire of the Kipp and Aldersyde towns to build an industrial base on coal mining, in particular, suggests little concern about the class and ethnic clashes, the social and moral problems, and the despoiled landscape often associated with that industry. Probably few boosters pondered the implications of their goals, but it is also possible that the anti-urban attitude of rural areas has been exaggerated and misunderstood.⁶⁵ Not until the grandest ambitions seemed doomed did the advantages of small town life creep into the promotional campaign. Rather than expressing deep-rooted anti-urban convictions, these arguments seemed designed to protect local trade or dissuade young people from leaving. Often they simply camouflaged envy and a sense of inferiority and failure. But if townspeople actually admired the city, why didn't they move there? Some did, of course, but most believed that the small community promised greater rewards to those who could only afford small investments in business and real estate.⁶⁶

It cannot be argued that only a vocal minority supported boosterism. Merchants dominated the promotional campaign, but in farm towns without industry they constituted the largest single economic group. Furthermore, CPR town lot sales records and tax rolls indicate widespread participation in real estate speculation by independent tradesmen, professionals, and even salaried employees. Local managers of regional and national corporations also became boosters because a growing town ensured a growing business that would increase commissions or lead to promotion elsewhere. Indeed

with its jubilant optimism, boosterism bolstered faith in social mobility. Was not the Ontario apprentice of yesterday a businessman in a new town today, and would not his investments in a future city make him a rich man tomorrow? Such prospects dampened social distinctions and conflicts within the towns and wedded newcomers to a common cause.

Many farmers also became boosters. A vast literature describes a rocky history of town-country relations in North America. Merchant credit, mail order catalogues, farmer-owned co-operatives, different lifestyles, goals, and attitudes, and (in Alberta) the class-consciousness of the United Farmers of Alberta have all been cited as sources of friction.⁶⁷ But boosterism along the Kipp and Aldersyde clearly blunted rather than sharpened any conflict, and long-time residents recall no special resentments by either side, in spite of the tendency of farmers to trade at more than one centre and disputes over mail order catalogues and pedlars. Too often such issues have been interpreted solely as town-country battles when townspeople themselves ordered from Eaton's or bought in the city as readily as farmers, a fact unhappily recognized by the merchants.⁶⁸ Virtually all studies of town-country conflict have focused on towns with populations far exceeding 1,000; much better relations prevailed in smaller places where town institutions could not survive without farm support and participation.⁶⁹ As with most organizations along the Kipp and Aldersyde, Boards of Trade claimed many farm members, and many merchants joined Agricultural Societies. Farmers often lived in town, especially in winter, and young people from town and country freely inter-married. On a modern frontier where literate, English-speaking farmers enjoyed the advantages of newspapers, magazines, railroads, and very soon, automobiles, radio, telephones, and movies, the frontier merchant no longer commanded his traditional role as the transmitter and interpreter of the outside world.

Small communities bred few social differences between town and country, and even encouraged common economic interests. All the men most closely associated with town founding owned farms as well as stores: C. W. Carman of Carmangay, E. E. Thompson of Brant, Martin Clever of Cleversville and Champion, and the Elves Brothers of Vulcan. Farmers speculated in town lots as readily as merchants in farm land, and near Vulcan alone at least seventeen farmers invested directly in stores.⁷⁰ But the vast majority who did not also discovered reasons for supporting town promotion. Boosters always emphasized the prosperity and potential of local agriculture and praised the intelligence and initiative of their farmers. Few criticized a campaign designed to raise the value of their land and flatter them at the same time. Farmers sometimes launched booster campaigns independently

of townspeople. Agricultural societies and rural local governments became major instruments of promotion, publishing their own literature, organizing local fairs, and establishing promotional displays at distant events.⁷¹

Even people who would not gain by it economically supported town promotion, for it inspired much more than greed. Some scholars have suggested that the twentieth century invasion of the countryside by brand name advertising, chain stores, and the new cultural technology robbed the small town of its independence, its distinctive character, and its historic role in setting standards of public taste and morality.⁷² Individuals derive much of their identity from where they live, and like the residents of Stephen Leacock's Mariposa, people in the small towns of the Kipp and Aldersyde cried out for recognition in a world increasingly dominated by big cities. This craving explains the pride attached to home town baseball teams, but emerged clearly in 1927 when boosters deliberately publicized an incident that could only tarnish Vulcan's image. A tornado struck. It uprooted telephone poles and drove them into the sides of homes. It tore buildings apart, demolished threshing machines, and imbedded blades of grass in fence posts. D. C. Jones, local druggist and prominent booster, photographed the tornado and gave the negative to a newspaper friend. When it received wide publication, residents forgot the destruction and basked in the fame it brought them—so much so that a local M.L.A., D. M. Galbraith, mailed Christmas cards featuring the photograph to acquaintances far and wide. The crowning triumph came when *Encyclopaedia Britannica* decided to publish Jones's photograph under its tornado entry.⁷³ Ironically, tornadoes are not common to the area, and a worse advertisement would be hard to imagine, yet not one suggested suppressing the picture and for decades residents spoke of "our tornado" with evident pride.

By harnessing strangers to a common purpose, generating optimism, instilling faith in social mobility, blunting town-country tensions, and forging local identity, boosterism instantly created a hearty civic spirit. Although cynics like Thorstein Veblen sneered that it was a device to raise real estate values, it nonetheless built sidewalks and churches and schools as well as businesses. Town pioneers organized local governments with robust enthusiasm. At Carmangay the ratepayers voted unanimously for municipal incorporation and "almost unanimously" at Vulcan.⁷⁴ Carmangay's first Village election in 1910 inspired six men to seek three Council seats, and the 157 ballots cast represented nearly every eligible voter. The following year twelve men battled for the seven positions required by the new Town status. Champion's first election attracted eight men to three Council positions, and brought out 99 voters, while the second contest

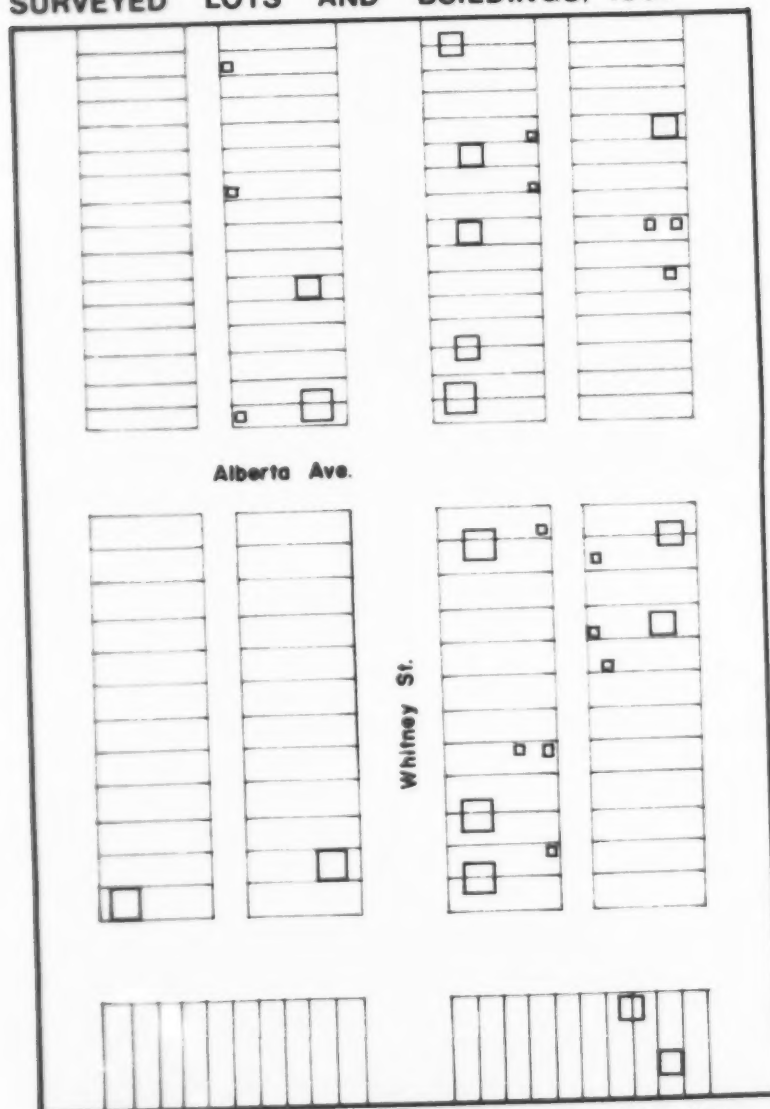
produced five candidates. When 208 voters selected three of the five aspirants to Vulcan's first Council, the *Times* claimed that nearly everyone with a franchise and "many without" had voted. The next election again yielded five candidates.⁷⁵ Hence in the towns' first years many eagerly sought the challenge of building a new community and voters proved just as anxious to select the best men for the job.⁷⁶

Boosterism also revealed its dark side, frequently imposing its narrow conformity on the thought and behaviour of small town inhabitants. Subtle intimidation accompanied such slogans as "Progress demands that there be no factions, Progress demands a unity of action..." The boosters branded those who did not support promotion as "kickers and knockers," and subjected them to public abuse. When a farmer east of Carmangay told a Lethbridge reporter that crops looked poor one year, the *Sun* suggested he was a fool and a liar.⁷⁷

Boosterism harboured other unpleasant surprises when the future refused to unfold according to plan. In ways that would erode early optimism and civic spirit, it marred the financial health of the towns, and even their physical appearance. Streets hurriedly gridded at right angles reflected only the CPR's concern for low survey costs and fast real estate sales. It planted Champion and Vulcan in soft, low-lying areas, perhaps as a precaution against runaway boxcars or in the hope of finding water easily, but both sites afforded poor water in insufficient supply. Champion sometimes hauled in drinking water, and the soft ground plagued road construction for decades, especially on Vulcan's elevator row. During the boom, merchants erected substandard buildings, and temporary shacks often became permanent structures. Only six years after Carmangay's birth, some buildings were no longer safe.⁷⁸

Consider as well the consequences of boosterism's closest ally, real estate promotion. Townspeople applauded the far-flung sale of property in hopes that development would follow, but speculators simply wanted quick resales. Hence farm land carved into small tracts lay idle. "Around Carmangay for four miles there is little but grass growing," complained one farmer in 1913. "Who owns all this land? Why don't they do something with it? We are all tired of driving over this stretch of desert to reach town, and town people must be tired of seeing it." Similarly, Carmangay's principal business streets developed in a relatively compact manner, but homes and minor commercial buildings sprawled across the townsite interspaced by hundreds of weed-infested vacant lots (see Map 4). By 1921 Carmangay's incorporated area of 640 acres housed only 300 people. This dispersed pattern strained the ability of towns to provide public utilities and services.⁷⁹ If many financial difficulties of the rural West can be

**map 4: PORTION OF CARMANGAY-
SURVEYED LOTS AND BUILDINGS, 1931**



Based on Western Canada Fire Underwriters' Association Map,
Carmangay, Alberta, 1920, with revisions, 1924, 1931, 1942
(Glenbow Alberta Institute).

attributed to low population density, so too can those of many prairie towns.

Vacant lands created other problems. Until 1916 Alberta towns employed the single tax system—taxes could be levied on land but not on improvements.⁸⁰ Hence if speculators did not pay land taxes, towns could not pay off debts acquired to finance civic improvements. These debts especially burdened frontier towns where everything had to be built from scratch. The mill rate in Carmangay spiralled from twenty in 1910 to fifty in 1917, largely to pay off debentures issued for the municipally-owned electrical and water works system. In the game of musical town lots, everyone tried to resell property before taxes came due, with the result that by 1913, sixty-one per cent of Carmangay's assessments had not been paid in full. When the recession struck western Canada that year, urban real estate values along the Kipp and Aldersyde, as elsewhere, collapsed immediately. Speculators now refused to pay back taxes because lots were suddenly worth less than the taxes owing on them.

Financial disaster followed. The debenture market dried up for western local governments, and remained generally dry until the 1940s. Even short-term financing became unavailable. In 1914 the Province learned that "the affairs of [Carmangay] are in bad condition financially. The Banks have refused to advance money and the only remedy appears to be action on the part of the Town to collect some of the unpaid taxes." Carmangay soon realized that seizing lots for back taxes eliminated forever any chance to collect funds when the lots could not be resold at public auction. Council delayed action in the hope that the real estate market would revive. It did not, and Carmangay defaulted on its debenture payments in 1915. The longer speculators held the lots, the less chance they had to sell for a profit, for back taxes continued to mount. Consequently, they neither sold them nor paid the taxes. Still the towns hesitated to seize the lots. No one bid on any land seized by Carmangay in 1920. Although the Town refused to approve applications for new subdivisions after 1913, it had eliminated less than 400 of 1,400 assessed lots by 1923.⁸¹

Residents resented paying taxes when absentee speculators did not, and they no longer paid on time or in full. The CPR, banks, and grain companies accused the towns of assessing them unfairly to make up the difference. In protest Vulcan grain companies refused to pay taxes for three years. In the mid-1920s the towns finally took action. By 1925 Carmangay had seized two-thirds of all the town lots for back taxes. Champion took similar, if less extensive steps, and the M.D. of Royal eliminated many subdivided lands in the unincorporated villages of Brant and Kirkcaldy.⁸²

Still the financial crisis deepened and by the 1930s many residents could not even pay taxes on improved lots. The towns circumvented outdated tax regulations by refusing to seize improved properties, by continually postponing sales or refusing to advertise them, or by placing reserve bids on homes so high that no one would buy them. Hence massive financial readjustments, further seizures of vacant lots, and the release of incorporated land to rural municipalities did not resume until the late 1930s and the 1940s.⁸³ Given the enormous problem of providing public services, enthusiasm for local politics steadily eroded. Attendance at ratepayer meetings fell, and fewer residents voted. The election of entire Councils by acclamation became common. Increasingly, towns postponed nomination meetings because not enough candidates came forward to fill Council vacancies.⁸⁴

In towns suffering from apathetic despair, incompetent and unethical practices flourished undetected for long periods of time. At Vulcan these problems surfaced dramatically between 1929 and 1931. An Alberta Wheat Pool investigator claimed that the Town's financial statements were inaccurate, misleading, and audited illegally by an unqualified individual. The Town made no effort to collect taxes and assessments contained irregularities. The Mayor and Secretary-Treasurer no longer consulted with Council, and residents had only "the vaguest idea as to the position of the Town's affairs."⁸⁵ The Alberta Municipal Inspector confirmed these allegations and added that the Mayor had "no idea of finance or administration," budgets had not been prepared for years, and the "existing state of the books and records was . . . nothing short of disgraceful."⁸⁶ Complaints about the laziness and carelessness of the Secretary-Treasurer also revealed corruption in both the Town and the M.D. of Royal.⁸⁷

The conduct of civic affairs seemed to operate according to some inverse law: the more boosterism inflated enthusiasm during the boom, the greater the collapse that followed. Citizens did not wholly abandon public affairs; they eagerly administered other local organizations, but as for tackling the crisis of local government, no one seemed interested. By the 1930s many believed that the towns might die anyway, yet although Carmangay and Champion would gradually lose most of their businesses by the 1970s, they would not disappear entirely, because the prairie town served vital functions of a purely social nature: it remained a gathering place for various organizations, institutions, and recreational events that were neither feasible nor desirable to centralize. Increasingly, these towns became places where farmers lived and socialized, and thus became more like the villages that characterized rural society throughout much of the world.⁸⁸

While failing to achieve its goals, boosterism clearly played a

major role in the history of small prairie towns. The booster mentality that characterized most western settlements inspired their very founding. Spurred by the success of the subsequent boom, town promotion became the primary public preoccupation of early residents, and they utilized every technique at their disposal to stimulate urban growth. Boosterism instantly fostered identity, civic spirit, and unity of purpose in new communities made up of a variety of people lacking common traditions to guide them. Important as this role might be, the long-term impact of boosterism often surprised its advocates. Where successful, it helped create an urban industrial society, but it could not solve its problems, and, as one study indicates, a booster mentality might even aggravate them.⁸⁹ And where boosterism failed, as in small prairie towns, its legacy of vacant lots and financial tragedy symbolized the crushed hopes of the city builders who failed.

NOTES

- Abbreviations: ALL — Alberta Legislative Library, Edmonton
 GAI — Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary
 MDK — M. D. Keenan, privately owned archival collection, Pincher Creek, Alberta
 PAA — Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton
 PAC — Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa
- ¹ Last verse of A. Ridgeway's "Carmangay," in *Carmangay Sun*, ALL, May 6, 1910.
 - ² See, for example, Alan F. J. Artibise, "Boosterism and the Development of Prairie Cities, 1871-1913," in this volume.
 - ³ Although some studies touch upon the subject (and have been cited throughout the Notes), the history of small towns in Canada has been generally neglected. Three helpful articles describing small town origins, growth, and boosterism in the American Great Plains are Kenneth Hammer, "Territorial Towns and the Railroads," *North Dakota History*, Vol. 36 (Fall, 1969), pp. 357-68; Donovan L. Holsommer, "Townsite Development on the Wichita Falls and Northwestern Railway," *Great Plains Journal*, Vol. 16 (Spring, 1977), pp. 107-23; and Rita Napier, "Economic Democracy in Kansas: Speculation and Townsite Pre-emption in Kickapoo," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 40 (Autumn, 1974), pp. 349-70. A useful approach to these themes is Oliver Knight, "Toward an Understanding of the Western Town," *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 4 (Jan., 1973), pp. 27-43.
 - ⁴ Regardless of legal status, the word town is applied throughout this article to trade centres located on railways because it was the term used by the residents themselves, and because village often refers to settlements inhabited almost wholly by farmers and lacking specialized functions. The word hamlet is applied to trade centres located off the railway.
 - ⁵ Of 2,432 places in the Prairie Provinces with at least one business establishment by 1930, 2,362 or 97 per cent of them had populations under 1,000. N. L. Whetten, "The Social and Economic Structure of the Trade Centres in the Canadian Prairie Provinces, With Special Reference to Its Changes, 1910-1930," Ph.D. Thesis (Harvard University, 1932), p. 42.
 - ⁶ *Carmangay Sun*, "Dry Farming Congress Edition," Oct. 21, 1912, MDK; and Western Canada Real Estate Company, *Some Truths of Carmangay: The Star Town of Southern Alberta* (Toronto: by author, 1912), p. 15, MDK.
 - ⁷ CPR Land Sales Records, GAI, Vol. 135, pp. 56-57; *Henderson's Manitoba and North West Territories Gazetteer and Directory*, 1905; and Supt. Primrose, "Monthly Reports of D Division, Macleod, Alberta," R.C.M.P. Records, PAC, Aug. 7, 1907, p. 5.
 - ⁸ H. S. Parker, "Brant, Alberta," unpub. ms. n.d., GAI; *High River Times*, ALL, Aug. 1, 1906 and May 14, 1908; *Henderson's*, 1905, p. 607; H. H. Thompson, "The Thompsons in Alberta," unpub. ms. n.d., GAI; and George B. Thompson, "Memoirs of Charles H. Thompson and Dorcas L. Thompson: Their Ancestors, Their Family and Their Descendants," unpub. ms. n.d., GAI, p. 16. Thompson carried \$20,000 in stock and turned over \$90,000 in business a year. See *High River Times*, Oct. 24, 1906 and July 2, 1908.
 - ⁹ *Nanton News*, ALL, July 22, 1909; *High River Times*, Mar. 15, 1906.
 - ¹⁰ Carmangay and District History Book Committee, *Bridging the Years: Carmangay and District* (Carmangay: by author, 1968), p. 155.

- ¹¹ Claresholm Review, ALL, Mar. 11, 1909. Also High River Times, Nov. 22, 1906 and July 30, 1908; Nanton News, June 8, 1905 and Jan. 18, 1906.
- ¹² High River Times, Aug. 12, 1909, June 10, 1909 and Aug. 11, 1910. Railway land grants in the area had gone to the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company. Transferred to another company, much of the land had been sold to settlers before the CPR decided to build a branch line.
- ¹³ Carmangay, Bridging, p. 6; Western Canada, Some Truths, p. 16; High River Times, July 1, 1909; CPR Land Sales Records, GAI, Vol. 49, pp. 62-79.
- ¹⁴ Claresholm Review, May 6, 1909; Supt. Primrose, "Monthly Reports," June 11, 1909, p. 4.
- ¹⁵ Claresholm Review, April 29, May 6, July 22, 1909; Nanton News, May 13, July 29, 1909.
- ¹⁶ Calculated from CPR Land Sales Records, GAI, Vol. 49, pp. 62-79. See also Carmangay Sun, Mar. 24, 1911.
- ¹⁷ Harvey Beaubier, interviewed at Champion, Alberta, June, 1978; Nanton News, Mar. 3, 1910; and Champion History Committee, Cleverville-Champion, 1905 to 1970: A History of Champion and Area (Champion: by authors, 1971?), p. 2.
- ¹⁸ Beaubier, interview; Adams, clipping; Nanton News, July 28, 1910; Carmangay Sun, July 15 and 22, 1910; and Photographs, MDK, Book 14L. A similar series of events occurred before and during the sale of the Vulcan townsite. See High River Times, June 23, 1910; Nanton News, September 15, 1910; E. G. Luston, "Vulcan," unpub. ms. 1958, Eleanor Luxton Papers, GAI, p. 1; CPR Land Sales Records, GAI, Vol. 49, pp. 134-40; Nanton News, September 22, 1910; and Calgary Herald, April 27, 1963.
- ¹⁹ CPR Land Sales Records, GAI, Vol. 49, pp. 111-16, 145-48, 168-73; Parker, "Brant"; High River Times, October 6, 1910; "Complaint of the Board of Trade of Ensign, Alberta, with Regard to the CPR Closing its Station at Brant," Board of Railway Commissioners, Transcripts of Hearings, PAC, Vol. 212, file 25119 (November 26, 1914), pp. 5881-85.
- ²⁰ Mrs. Folk, "A Eulogy of the Carmangay Ladies Aid From 1910 to 1935," unpub. ms. 1935?; Carmangay Pastoral Charge Papers, United Church of Canada Records, PAA; Canada, Sessional Papers 15, 1912, Appendix I, p. 106; Supt. Primrose, "Monthly Reports," Aug. 24, 1910; Letter, Thos. M. Melrose to Canon Hogbin, Sept. 14, 1911, Carmangay Papers, Anglican Church of Canada Diocese of Calgary Archives, University of Calgary Library; Carmangay Sun, Aug. 11, 1910; Claresholm Review, Aug. 5, 1909; Supt. Primrose, "Monthly Reports," Nov. 15, 1910, p. 5, June 15, 1912, Dec. 12, 1912, p. 6; Carmangay Sun, Sept. 29, 1910, April 1, 1910, and Dec. 8, 1910.
- ²¹ High River Times, Nov. 30, 1911 and April 18, 1912; Carmangay Sun, Mar. 18, 1910; Will E. Finley, letter published in Hastings Michigan Journal-Herald, May, 1913 reprinted in Carmangay Sun, May 30, 1913; Letter, Thos. Little to Deputy Minister of Public Works, Aug. 20, 1909, Village of Carmangay Correspondence, Municipality Correspondence Files, Alberta Department of Municipal Affairs Papers, PAA, Box 90, file 1177. Also Claresholm Review, Aug. 26, 1909.
- ²² Calculated from CPR Land Sales Records, GAI, Vol. 49, pp. 134-40; and High River Times, "Homeseekers Edition," May, 1912.
- ²³ Calculated from Village of Champion Tax Rolls, 1914, Village Office, Champion, Alberta; and Village of Vulcan Tax Rolls, 1914, Town Office, Vulcan, Alberta.
- ²⁴ Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 1, pp. 181, 134-35; Village of Carmangay Assessment and Tax Rolls, 1912-13, both in Village Office, Carmangay, Alberta; and Letter, Carmangay Board of Trade to Minister of Public Works, Nov. 9, 1909, Village of Carmangay Correspondence, Carmangay Sun, June 3, 1910, May 12, 1911, and May 31, 1912.
- ²⁵ Calculated from Village of Carmangay Assessment and Tax Rolls, 1913-1914.
- ²⁶ CPR Land Sales Records, GAI, Vol. 49, p. 67; and Carmangay Sun, Oct. 11, 1912.
- ²⁷ Letter, Carmangay Board of Trade to Deputy Minister of Public Works, June, 1909, Village of Carmangay Correspondence; Vulcan Board of Trade to Deputy Minister of Public Works, Nov. 26, 1910, Village of Vulcan Correspondence; Claresholm Review, June 24, 1900; and Letter, Deputy Minister of Public Works to A. A. Ballachey, July 15, 1912, Village of Vulcan Correspondence.
- ²⁸ Vulcan Review, ALL, Mar. 19, 1913; Champion Chronicle, ALL, Mar. 17, 1921. This development was common in other small towns. See Bodil J. Jensen, "The County of Mountain View, 1890-1925," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1972), pp. 71-72.
- ²⁹ Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 1, pp. 177-78; and Western Canada, Some Truths, p. 3.
- ³⁰ Vulcan Advocate, privately owned collection, Vulcan Advocate Office, Vulcan, Alberta, June 11 and Aug. 27, 1919.
- ³¹ "A Southern Alberta Town in the Making," in Why Go To Canada? (Calgary: Herald, June, 1910); Lethbridge Herald, April 2, 1910, p. 57; Carmangay Sun, "Dry Farming Congress Edition," Oct. 21, 1912; Vulcan Advocate, Oct. 22, 1913. Original subscription lists have been lost. Estimates based on Tax Rolls, incidental sources, and information in Vulcan Review, Dec. 17, 1912; and Calgary Herald, Sept. 10, 1936.

- ³² Carmangay Sun, Feb. 23, 1911; Western Canada, *Some Truths*; and Beaubier, interview.
- ³³ Vulcan Advocate, Mar. 10, 1915. A collection of post cards is located in the Vulcan Archives, Vulcan, Alberta. The Chicago article was reprinted in the Carmangay Sun, Mar. 24, 1911.
- ³⁴ Vulcan Advocate, Aug. 18, 1915; *Farm and Ranch Review*, Oct. 21, 1912, p. 882; Vulcan Advocate, June 22, 1921 and July 7, 1920; and Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 49.
- ³⁵ Vulcan Advocate, April 7, 1920. For information on semi-professional baseball in the area, and its high quality, see clippings, photographs, letters, and statistical records in MDK Collection, especially Alex Allan, "Baseball Recollections," magazine clippings, n.d., Book 21M; John L. Edlund, "Baseball in Claresholm as I Remember it From 1921-1928," magazine clipping, n.d., Book 21 N; "Early Years of the Champion Senior Baseball Teams in Summary," unpub. ms, n.d., Book 22L. For a general description of small town professional baseball in the Great Plains see Gary Lucht, "Scobey's Touring Pros: Wheat, Baseball, and Illicit Booze," *Montana Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Summer, 1970), pp. 88-93.
- ³⁶ Vulcan Advocate, Aug. 30, 1916; Carmangay Sun, June 17, 1910; Newspaper clippings, MDK, Book 22A; Carmangay Sun, July 15, 1910; Vulcan Advocate, July 19, 1922, and June 11 and 18, 1919. See also "Champion Senior Baseball," Bessie Siler, interviewed in Lethbridge Herald, May 17, 1975; and Champion History, *Cleaverville-Champion*, pp. 531-32.
- ³⁷ Edlund, "Baseball in Claresholm"; Roy E. Orcutt, untitled, unpub. ms, n.d., MDK, Book 23B; and Carmangay Sun, May 20, 1910; Letter, Roy Orcutt to M. D. Keenan, Aug. 7, 1975, MDK; and Vulcan Advocate, April 1, 1914.
- ³⁸ Beaubier, interview; Allan, "Baseball Recollections," Vulcan Advocate, Aug. 14, 1918 and March 3, 1918; and Siler, interview.
- ³⁹ Vulcan Advocate, Nov. 29 and Dec. 20, 1922; *ibid.*, Feb. 21, 28 and May 16, 1923. For more information see photographs in Vulcan Archives, Vulcan, Alberta; Lethbridge Herald, "Fortieth Anniversary Progress and Development Edition," Dec. 11, 1947, 4th sec., p. 9; Calgary Herald, April 27, 1963; and Vulcan and District Historical Society, *Wheat Country: A History of Vulcan and District* (Vulcan: by author, 1973), pp. 946-47.
- ⁴⁰ Vulcan Review, Mar. 26, 1912; Carmangay Sun, "Dry Farming Congress Edition," Oct. 21, 1912, MDK; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 1, pp. 55-56.
- ⁴¹ Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 2, p. 97; Carmangay Sun, Mar. 25, 1910; Oct. 20, 1911; Nov. 12 and 19, 1920; Vulcan Advocate, all issues, Sept., 1922; Claresholm Review, Dec. 16, 1909; and Champion Board of Trade, *Grain Golden Champion* (Champion: by author, 1912), MDK, pp. 16-17.
- ⁴² Western Canada, *Some Truths*, p. 9; Champion B. of T., *Grain Golden Champion*, p. 15. See also Nanton News, July 22, 1909; Vulcan Advocate, July 15 and Sept. 30, 1914; and Carmangay Sun, July 3, 1914 and Oct. 18, 1912.
- ⁴³ Claresholm Review, Jan. 13, 1910; Carmangay Sun, many issues, 1910-13; Nanton News, July 21, 1910; R. F. P. Bowan, *Railways in Southern Alberta* (Lethbridge: Occasional Paper No. 4, Whoop-Up Chapter, Historical Society of Alberta, 1973), p. 30; and Vulcan Review, July 2, 1912.
- ⁴⁴ Vulcan Advocate, May 21, 1919 and Feb. 12, 1919; and Municipal District of Royal 158 Minutes, County of Vulcan No. 2 Records, PAA, Vol. 1, p. 73.
- ⁴⁵ High River Times, Sept. 5, 1907; Nanton News, Dec. 22, 1910.
- ⁴⁶ Carmangay accused Claresholm of obtaining the school by unfair political means. Carmangay Sun, May 12, 1911.
- ⁴⁷ Letters, C. Rhodes to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, April 3 and Sept. 9, 1936, Municipal District of Harmony 128 Correspondence, Municipality Correspondence Files, Alberta Department of Municipal Affairs Papers, PAA, Box 113, files 1339-40; Oldman River Regional Planning Commission, *Town of Vulcan, Alberta, Canada: General Plan, 1967: Revised Analysis of the Survey* (Lethbridge: by author, 1967), p. 25; Alberta Department of Public Works, *Annual Reports* (Edmonton: by author, 1916), p. 153-71.
- ⁴⁸ Carmangay Sun, Nov. 17, 1911; May 16 and 23, 1913; Mar. 27, Aug. 13 and 20, Nov. 26, 1914; April 24, 1915; Dec. 3, 1920; Mar. 9, 1923; and Vulcan Advocate, April 29, 1925.
- ⁴⁹ Carmangay merchants worried that they would lose business to the new towns. Carmangay Sun, April 1, 1910 and June 5, 1914. On the rail issue see "Complaint of the Board of Trade of Ensign, Alberta, with Regard to the CPR Closing its Station at Brant," Vol. 212, Nov. 26, 1914; "Restoration of Daily Day Service on CPR Lethbridge to Calgary, via Aldersyde," Vol. 406, July 10, 1927; both in Board of Railway Commissioners Transcripts of Hearings, PAC; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 2, p. 257; Municipal District of Royal 158 Minutes, Vol. 2, Jan. 13, 1934; and Vulcan Advocate, Dec. 20 and 27, 1922.
- ⁵⁰ Number of businesses here is not identical with number of business establishments but rather with number of business functions; whenever a merchant offered two services not normally associated with each other, they have been counted as two businesses. Most of the information for this paragraph was calculated from *Henderson's Alberta Gazetteer and Directory*, 1911, 1914, 1928-29; *Wrigley's Alberta Directory*, 1920, 1922; and R. G. Dun and Co., *Mercantile Agency Reference Book*, 1921, 1925, 1928, 1932.

- ⁵¹ C. C. Zimmerman, *Farm Trade Centres in Minnesota, 1805-1920* (Minneapolis: University of Minn. Agricultural Experimental Station, Bulletin 269), p. 10; and C. A. Dawson and E. R. Young, *Pioneering in the Prairie Provinces: The Social Side of the Settlement Process* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1940), pp. 48-52.
- ⁵² Although the approach is not particularly historical, these problems are examined in detail by Peter Woroby, "Functional Relationship Between Farm Population and Service Centers," M.Sc. Thesis (University of Manitoba, 1957), and J. E. Lamb, "Some Aspects of the Settlement Geography of Southern Manitoba," M.A. Thesis (University of Manitoba, 1970).
- ⁵³ Whetten, "Trade Centres," pp. 93-96, 42-43, 57; Carle C. Zimmerman and Garry W. Moneo, *The Prairie Community System* (Ottawa: Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada 1970), p. 30; Canada, *Census of Canada, 1931*, Vol. 8, p. 696 and Vol. 10, pp. 876-77.
- ⁵⁴ Thorstein Veblen, "The Country Town," in *Absentee Ownership and Business Enterprise in Recent Times: The Case of America* (first published 1923; New York: Sentry Press, 1964), pp. 147-48; Dawson, *Pioneering*, pp. 301-02; Whetten, "Trade Centres," pp. 143-46, 148-50; Lewis E. Atherton, "The Midwestern County Town: Myth and Reality," *Agricultural History*, Vol. 26 (July, 1952), pp. 73-80; *Vulcan Advocate*, Mar. 15, 1922; and many interviews, elderly farmers, County of Vulcan, 1978. Prominent farmers were often reported visiting a variety of towns by various local newspapers. For Alberta, see Jean Burnet, *Next-Year Country: A Study of Rural Social Organization in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951), p. 55. For a study of the impact of the automobile on a small Illinois town see Norman T. Nolin, *Mobility and the Small Town 1900 to 1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, Department of Geography Research Paper 132, 1971).
- ⁵⁵ *Vulcan Advocate*, Dec. 3, 1913.
- ⁵⁶ Interview, C. H. "Budd" Andrews, near Vulcan, Alberta, Jan., 1978; *Vulcan Advocate*, Jan. 25, 1922; *Carmangay Sun*, Jan. 3 and 10, 1913, Oct. 29, 1920; *Vulcan Advocate*, Dec. 1, 1913; *Vulcan Review*, Oct. 1, 1912; Canada, *Sessional Papers*, 28, 1916, p. 71; *Carmangay Sun*, Mar. 24 and June 9, 1911; Petition attached to By-law 11, Village of Champion By-laws, Village Office, Champion, Alberta; *Carmangay Sun*, May 4, 1916 and Aug. 31, 1917; *Vulcan Advocate*, May 28, 1919, May 31, 1922, and Aug. 20, 1919; Revised By-law 11, Nov. 9, 1931, Village of Champion By-laws; and By-law 53, Dec. 1, 1930, Town of Vulcan By-laws, Town Office, Vulcan, Alberta.
- ⁵⁷ Municipal District of Harmony 128 Minutes, Vol. 2, May 19, 1927, County of Vulcan No. 2 Records, PAA; and *Carmangay, Bridging*, p. 351.
- ⁵⁸ *Carmangay Sun*, Sept. 1, 1910 and June 9, 1911; *Vulcan Review*, Oct. 15, 1912 and Feb. 25, 1913; *Vulcan Advocate*, May 5, 1920; *Lethbridge Herald*, "Alberta's Golden Jubilee Edition," June 25, 1955, sec. 3, p. 32; and Letter, James Smart to A. G. Long, April 27, 1917, Calgary Fire Department Correspondence, GAI.
- ⁵⁹ For two examples see Burnet, *Next-Year*, p. 79; and Richard G. Bremer, *Agricultural Change in an Urban Age: The Loup Country of Nebraska, 1910-1970* (Lincoln: University of Neb. Studies, New Series 51, 1976), p. 39. George Britnell, *The Wheat Economy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939), pp. 27-28 reports that Eaton's alone sold \$22 million in goods in the Prairie Provinces in 1930. See also *Vulcan Advocate*, July 12, 1922; Oct. 22, 1913; Nov. 25, 1914; Sept. 8, 1915; any issue, spring, 1922; *Carmangay Sun*, July 15, 1910.
- ⁶⁰ Letter, Village of Champion to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Aug. 29, 1913, Village of Champion Correspondence; *Carmangay Sun*, Mar. 23, 1916; *Nanton News*, Nov. 10, 1915; Letter, Village of Champion to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, April 21, 1931, Village of Champion Correspondence; and Letter, Town of Vulcan to Acting Minister of Municipal Affairs, June 1, 1931, Town of Vulcan Correspondence.
- ⁶¹ *High River Times*, Sept. 7, 1911; Champion Board of Trade, *Grain Golden Champion*, p. 1; *Western Canada, Some Truths*, p. 14; and *Carmangay Sun*, Mar. 31, 1911.
- ⁶² Of 160 businessmen listed in 1922, 48 per cent had left by 1928. See entries for Vulcan, Champion, Carmangay, Brant, Ensign, and Kirkcaldy in *Henderson's*, 1911, 1914, 1928-29; and *Wrigley's*, 1920, 1922. See also Tax Rolls of Vulcan, Carmangay, and Champion, 1914, 1920, 1922, 1928.
- ⁶³ Don Harrison Doyle, "Social Theory and New Communities," *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (April, 1977), p. 164, notes that such appeals were also common during the settlement of the American mid-west.
- ⁶⁴ This observation is based on many unpublished documents, interviews, and newspaper articles, and will be expanded upon in a forthcoming study.
- ⁶⁵ J. F. Newman, "The Impact of Technology upon Rural Southwestern Manitoba, 1920-1930," M.A. Thesis (Queen's University, 1971), pp. 39-57, argues that small-town people believed that they could somehow accommodate a degree of industry without sacrificing the virtues of rural life.
- ⁶⁶ Many interviews, County of Vulcan, 1978; and *Vulcan Advocate*, Sept. 2, 1914.
- ⁶⁷ For Alberta, all these arguments can be found in Jean Burnet, "Town-Country Relations and the Problem of Rural Leadership," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. 13 (Aug., 1947), pp. 395-410. See also Robert R. Dykstra "Town-Country Conflict: A

- Hidden Dimension in American Social History." *Agricultural History*, Vol. 38 (Oct., 1964), pp. 195-205; and Stanley B. Parsons, *The Populist Context: Rural Versus Urban Power on a Great Plains Frontier* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 1973).
- ⁶⁸ Many interviews, County of Vulcan, 1978; and *Vulcan Advocate*, Dec. 24, 1913.
- ⁶⁹ Size alone was a crucial factor. While Burnet's study of Hanna, Alberta is often cited as evidence of town-country conflict, the smooth relationships he reported between farmers and the much smaller town of Oyen is often ignored. *Next-Year Country*, pp. 52-75.
- ⁷⁰ Based on biographical files compiled from many sources.
- ⁷¹ Local Improvement District 128 Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 17, County of Vulcan No. 2 Records, PAA.
- ⁷² Veblen, "Country Town," pp. 151-56; Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman, *Small Town in Mass Society: Class, Power, and Religion in a Rural Community*, revised ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968).
- ⁷³ *Calgary Herald*, July 9, 1927; A. B. Lowe and G. A. McKay, *The Tornadoes of Western Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Department of Transport, Meteorological Branch, 1962), p. 16; Adam Arney Papers, GAI; and D. C. Jones, interview, *Calgary Herald*, April 27, 1963.
- ⁷⁴ Veblen, "Country Town," pp. 142-44; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 26; *Carmangay Sun*, Aug. 6, 1910; *High River Times*, Mar. 15, 1912; and *Vulcan Review*, Mar. 19, 1912.
- ⁷⁵ Letter, Village of Carmangay Returning Officer to Department of Public Works, Feb. 10, 1910; Village of Carmangay Correspondence; *Carmangay Sun*, April 21, 1911; *Calgary Albertan*, April 18, 1911; Letters, Village of Champion Returning Officer to Deputy Minister of Public Works, June 2, 1911 and Jan. 22, 1912; Village of Champion Correspondence; *High River Times*, Jan. 23, 1913; Letter, Village of Vulcan Returning Officer to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Jan. 28, 1913; Village of Vulcan Correspondence; and *Vulcan Advocate*, Dec. 17, 1913.
- ⁷⁶ This evidence seems to support the thesis advanced by Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, "A Meaning for Turner's Frontier, Part I: Democracy in the Old Northwest," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 69 (Sept., 1954), pp. 321-53. They argued that the immense task of community building forced pioneers to make many decisions, resulting in widespread interest and participation in local government (pp. 321-40), especially in the American mid-west where town promotion promised to enrich everyone (pp. 340-53).
- ⁷⁷ *Vulcan Advocate*, Mar. 24, 1920; and *Carmangay Sun*, June 27, 1913.
- ⁷⁸ Village of Champion Minutes, Vol. 1, pp. 93-94; Village Office, Champion, Alberta. For poor towns site selection in other areas see Jensen, "County of Mountain View." *Carmangay Sun*, Mar. 23, 1916; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 2, pp. 101, 199, 315. For a personal but interesting view of the aesthetic shortcomings of the prairie town see Ronald Rees, "The Small Towns of Saskatchewan," *Landscape*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Fall, 1969), pp. 29-33.
- ⁷⁹ Letter to Editor, *Carmangay Sun*, Dec. 31, 1913. For other towns with the problem of vacant lands, see E. B. Mitchell, *In Western Canada Before the War: A Study of Communities* (London: John Murray, 1915), pp. 13-14; Canada, *Census of Canada 1921*, Vol. 1, p. 222, 228; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 228.
- ⁸⁰ Eric J. Hanson, *Local Government in Alberta* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1956), p. 40. For a general discussion of the single tax in prairie urban areas see Alan F. J. Artibise, "Continuity and Change: Elites and Prairies Urban Development, 1914-1950," in Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, eds., *The Usable Urban Past: Planning and Politics in the Modern Canadian City* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 130-154.
- ⁸¹ Letter, Acting Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs to Deputy Minister of Education, July 24, 1914; Town of Carmangay Correspondence; Letter, Town of Carmangay to Minister Municipal Affairs, Nov. 22, 1913; Town of Carmangay Correspondence; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 1, pp. 251, 282; Telegram, W. L. McKinnon and Co. to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, June 7, 1915; Town of Carmangay Correspondence; Letter, Town of Carmangay to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Sept. 14, 1921; Town of Carmangay Correspondence; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 2, p. 83; Village of Champion Council Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 60; Village of Vulcan Council Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 153; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 1, pp. 181, 216, 218; *Carmangay Sun*, Mar. 27, 1914. Through the Town Planning Act of 1913, the Department of Municipal Affairs could veto new sub-divisions in any town. See David G. Bettison and others, *Urban Affairs in Alberta* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1975), pp. 18-23. See Village and Town of Carmangay Tax Rolls, 1914, 1923.
- ⁸² Letter, Town of Carmangay to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Sept. 19, 1924; Town of Carmangay Correspondence; Village and Town Council of Carmangay Minutes, Vol. 2, p. 329; Village and Town of Carmangay Tax Rolls, 1923, 1924; Letter, Secretary-Treasurer of Town of Carmangay to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mar. 23, 1925; Town of Carmangay Correspondence; Letter, Village of Champion to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mar. 14, 1923; "Notice of Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs," April 6, 1933, in

- Village of Champion Correspondence; Village of Champion Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 219; Municipal District of Royal 158 Minutes, Vol. 2, May 30, 1925.
- ⁸³ Letter, C. A. Craig to Minister Municipal Affairs, June, 1937, Town of Vulcan Correspondence; Letters, Mayor E. King to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Sept. 11, 1934 and Town of Vulcan to Supervisor of Tax Recovery, Aug. 20, 1937, Town of Vulcan Correspondence; Letter, Village of Champion to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Sept. 14, 1931, Village of Champion Correspondence; and Village and Town of Carmangay By-laws, new series, No. 6 to 136, Village of Champion By-laws, No. 29 to 73.
- ⁸⁴ Carmangay Sun, Dec. 2, 1916; Vulcan Advocate, Sept. 16, 1914 and June 29, 1921; Champion Chronicle, Dec. 10, 1925; Letters, Town of Carmangay to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Dec. 8, 1914, Town of Carmangay Correspondence; Village of Champion Returning Officer to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Jan., 1917; Village of Champion to Minister of Municipal Affairs, Jan. 1, 1918, Village of Champion Correspondence; and Town of Vulcan Returning Officer to Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Feb. 10, 1923, Town of Vulcan Correspondence.
- ⁸⁵ Letter, E. B. Howers to Alex Cameron, Nov. 19, 1931, Town of Vulcan Correspondence.
- ⁸⁶ Letter, H. A. Kidney to Acting Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, April 8, 1931, Town of Vulcan Correspondence, "Inspectors' Reports," Vulcan, Oct. 12, 1920, Alberta Department of Municipal Affairs Papers, PAA, Microfilm 945.
- ⁸⁷ Dozens of letters, 1929-32 in Town of Vulcan Correspondence; Municipal District of Royal 158 Correspondence; "Inspectors' Reports"; Vulcan, "Inspectors' Reports"; Municipal District of Royal 158, Alberta Department of Municipal Affairs Papers, PAA, Microfilm 948.
- ⁸⁸ For important non-economic functions in towns see T. Lynn Smith, "The Role of the Village in American Rural Society," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 7 (Mar., 1942), pp. 10-21; and Carle C. Zimmerman and Garry Moneo, "The Total Community of the Canadian Wheat Prairies," *Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, Vol. 18 (1970), pp. 6-28; Zimmerman and Moneo, *Prairie Community*, *passim*.
- ⁸⁹ Alan F. J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975).

7. LETHBRIDGE: OUTPOST OF A COMMERCIAL EMPIRE, 1885-1906

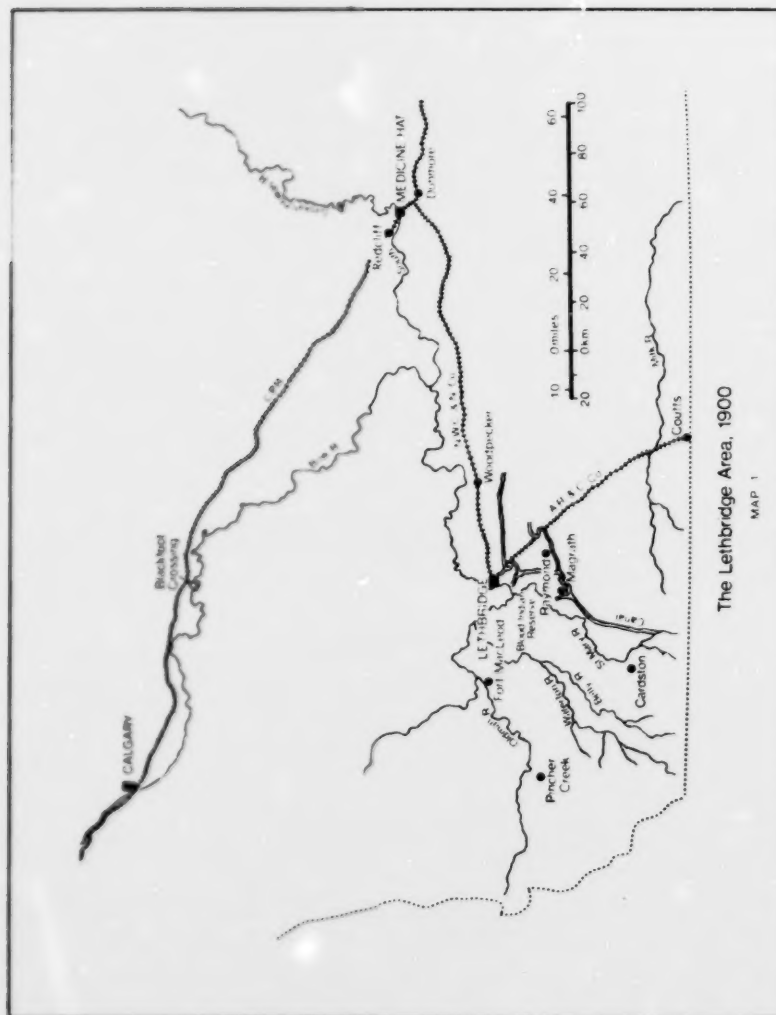
A. A. DEN OTTER

Although Lethbridge is surrounded by the grasslands of the southern Alberta prairies, it did not become a ranching centre. Instead, a series of decisions made in the board rooms of several London-based companies turned Lethbridge into a small coal mining town with its own businessmen, professionals and executives. This group of leaders, most of whom were Ontario-born, had their own purpose for their newly-adopted home. They envisioned a great industrial metropolis based on the extensive coal deposits of the area. It was an idle dream. Lethbridge was too much a part of an overpowering commercial empire to control its own destiny completely. Even the coal companies, which initially sought only to develop the coal seams, found that economic circumstances and market conditions forced it to build railways, acquire lands, and eventually expand into irrigation. It was these irrigation works which made possible the intensive agricultural settlement of the region and transformed the coal town into an agricultural service centre.

I

Sir Alexander Galt, who as Canada's high commissioner in London was responsible for the young country's campaign to promote immigration to the Northwest, was among the first to recognize the tremendous potential for profit presented by the vast coal deposits on the western fringes of the prairies. In April 1882 he incorporated the North Western Coal and Navigation Company [NWC&NCO], a corporation backed by prominent investors from Winnipeg, Montreal and London.¹ By the fall of that year, after an extensive survey of the Bow and Belly Rivers, the company's directors decided to open a coal mine near the confluence of the Belly and Oldman rivers, at present day Lethbridge (see Map 1)². This decision, made in London by a group of businessmen, had a greater impact upon the physical and social environment of southern Alberta than centuries of climatic conditions, natural cycles of growth and erosion, or even human presence.

The Lethbridge site had a serious drawback, however. It was situated a hundred miles from the proposed CPR main line, a disadvantage which required a substantial investment in some means



of transportation. Galt chose the cheapest technique. In the summer of 1883 he built a 173-foot sternwheel steamer, the *Baroness*, and acquired a small fleet of barges. Owing to the lateness of the season, the boat made only one trip that year and delivered a paltry two hundred tons of coal.³ During the following winter Galt tried to gather financial and government support for a private railway to the CPR main line but was unsuccessful. Since he wanted "to show by actual results that the coal can be got out for what it will be sold at,"⁴ he constructed two more steamers, the 120-foot *Alberta* and the much smaller tugboat *Minnow*. Low water again foiled his plans and the entire fleet delivered a negligible quantity of coal during the summer of 1884.

With the inefficiency of the steamers clearly proven, Sir Alexander redoubled his efforts to win a government subsidy for a narrow-gauge railway to the CPR main line. He found federal administrators anxious to secure a stable fuel supply for prairie settlers and western railways; they granted the NWC&NCo a precedent-setting subsidy of 3,840 acres per mile of railway free except for a ten cents per acre survey charge. The government also sold the company 10,000 acres of coal lands for ten dollars per acre.⁵

Armed with this generous government subsidy, Galt concluded the difficult negotiations with his London backers. The gloomy economic climate of the mid-1880s had created a general mood of timidity among investors, particularly in railway shares; but Galt's comprehensive package of railway, coal and land development eventually won over his friends. Construction on the narrow-gauge, begun in the fall of 1884, was completed the following summer. On 25 August 1885 the first train rolled into Lethbridge.⁶ The search for an efficient means of transportation had transformed a relatively simple coal-mining venture into a capital-intensive and diversified railway-colonization enterprise dependent upon intensive planning and complex techniques.

With the means of transportation assured, the NWC&NCo could commence full production, and it began to recruit miners from across the continent. Suddenly the small mining camp throbbed with new life; town lots sold briskly and buildings shot up everywhere. By the end of October 1885 Lethbridge boasted over sixty buildings including six stores, five hotels with saloons, four billiard rooms, two barbershops, and a livery stable. Despite the hasty construction, overall development was orderly because the company, as the original landowners, had surveyed the site and laid out wide and straight streets in accordance with prairie custom. The scarcity of building materials severely limited the erection of private dwellings and for some time many of the miners lived in tents. Within months, Lethbridge had sprouted from a primitive mining camp into a thriving urban centre.

According to the *Macleod Gazette* the town appeared instantly "like a newborn infant city dropped from the clouds."⁷

The almost instantaneous creation of a new town did not produce the excessive violence and disorder one would expect from an uprooted, hastily assembled, and masculine population. To be sure, Lethbridge was a rough town, plagued by numerous drunken brawls, several gambling dens and open prostitution. Yet, violent crimes such as murder and armed robbery were rare. Lethbridge was not lawless. From the town's inception the North West Mounted Police had watched it carefully and in 1886 established its K division just to the south of the settlement. Through good humour and tact, particularly of commanding officers like Captain Burton Deane, the police were able to moderate the exuberance of an immature society. They also fulfilled a social function. Beginning in 1887, the NWMP sponsored annual balls at the barracks and its band regularly performed at community affairs. Captain Deane, a former British military officer, clearly placed his stamp on the town. He was active in the Anglican church, visibly involved in local politics, and founder of a number of clubs, including a troupe of amateur actors.⁸

Under the protective umbrella of the mounted police, the new town quickly achieved the basic stability needed to foster the growth of social institutions. These establishments were organized mainly by a small group of young and ambitious businessmen, professionals and executives who saw in Lethbridge an opportunity for social and economic advancement. One such individual was Harry Bentley, an employee of an Ontario retail firm, sent West to start a store at Medicine Hat. Personal fortune beckoned, however, and Bentley borrowed enough money to set up his own store in Lethbridge. Within a year he was one of the wealthiest men in the town, owner of a retail store, wholesale outlet, stage coach operation and a partnership in a hotel. His interest was not limited to commercial dealings, however, as Bentley was a founding member of most of the town's social organizations, including the town council.⁹

Some company officials, too, played a prominent role in the formative years of Lethbridge. The most notable was Charles A. Magrath, the NWC&NCo's land commissioner. Like Bentley, Magrath was Ontario-born, young and aggressive. He established an intimate friendship with Elliott Galt, Sir Alexander's eldest son and the company's resident manager. He also became a leader of the town's social elite, actively involved in virtually all its clubs and associations, elected as the town's first mayor and a year later as its first MLA. Men like Magrath, Dr. F. H. Mewburn, the town's physician, and C. F. P. Conybeare, a lawyer, were members of a close and lasting circle of friends which provided a measure of social cohesiveness in a young and volatile community.

The voice of this small group was the *Lethbridge News*, a gossip, lively weekly founded by S. Saunders in 1885, only months after the completion of the railway. Its editor, a former mounted policeman, was a westerner in the sense that he embraced the spirit of the frontier—the desire to create in western Canada the idealized features of the Ontario most of his readers had left behind. This utopian vision, however, was based on the general belief, increasingly common in central Canada, indeed in the western world, that economic progress was not only highly desirable but absolutely essential to a community's survival. Accordingly, the *News* faithfully recorded every step in the town's growth, constantly pleaded for more capital investments, and enthusiastically promoted any scheme which promised further expansion. Since economic progress was the weekly's prime concern, it focussed all its attention on the people most actively engaged in the advancement of community institutions, the leading businessmen, company officials, churchmen and professionals. The paper wanted to project for the benefit of prospective investors and citizens an image of Lethbridge as a progressive town with unlimited potential for future expansion. Consequently, its editor ignored the less tangible contributions of the miners, the railwaymen, their wives and children; he glossed over labour difficulties or social problems, avoided discussing the dearth of recreational facilities for the workers, the physical hardships of mining, the tedium of living in a small, isolated, one-company town. Instead, Saunders emphasized the positive features of life in Lethbridge, its picnics, sports days, quadrille clubs and debating societies—in sum, the bright and pleasant aspects of sophisticated urban life.¹⁰

The discovery and exploitation of the coal seams of the Belly River, then, had spawned a new town. The mining company had laid out the townsite and recruited most of its population. More significantly, by allowing private businessmen to serve its employees, it permitted the formation of a small core of leaders, a group of individuals who seized the opportunity to establish their families and create prosperous careers in the new centre. While these men wanted a pleasant place to live, they also wanted to build a progressive town, a thriving community which would attract many other businessmen and investors. Within the year they established schools and churches, supported a newspaper, and founded various social organizations as a means of lifting Lethbridge out of its crude pioneer stage. Their goal was to transform Lethbridge into the leading city in western Canada, a newer version of familiar urban centres in central and eastern Canada and in Great Britain.

II

The economic future of Lethbridge was not as bright as its

boosters wished. The mainstay of the town's economy, the NWC&NCo, was dependent almost entirely upon the CPR, which never bought as much coal as the colliery could produce. Moreover, in mid-March 1886, the railway informed Sir Alexander Galt that because its Pennsylvania coal suppliers had reduced their prices he must cut his by half.¹¹ Galt had no choice and to meet the crisis he purchased several coal-cutting machines, fired all his workers and rehired only the married men at drastically reduced wages. He also engaged a contingent of unemployed Hungarian coal loaders.¹² The search for profit thus affected the very social fabric of the small mining town.

Galt's measures were defensive tactics which failed to solve his basic problem. He had built the coal mine on the premise of a rapidly expanding prairie population. This had not materialized and so coal sales were too small to repay the large investment in the highly mechanized colliery. Owing to the nature of its product, the NWC&NCo could not significantly increase consumer demand through advertising. The only solution was expansion. The colliery could survive only if it broke out of the confines of the small western Canadian market.

To meet this objective Galt persuaded several powerful Montana investors to help him build a railway from Lethbridge to the smelting industries of western Montana.¹³ The project was delayed several years because the CPR had a monopoly on all railway construction within thirty miles of the international boundary. By the spring of 1889, however, Parliament had repealed the CPR's monopoly and approved a charter for a narrow-gauge railway from Lethbridge to the international boundary to meet an American line coming from Great Falls. It also granted Galt's company a 6,400-acre per mile subsidy. With his hand strengthened by the government concessions, Galt transferred all the assets and liabilities of the NWC&NCo to a newly capitalized, London-based company, the Alberta Railway and Coal Company [AR&CCo], which built the Montana railway during the summer of 1890.¹⁴

The search for efficiency, which motivated Galt and his business associates, had enlarged the original modest coal-mining venture into a miniature but developing empire firmly enmeshed in the machinery of the world of finance, railways and energy. Once committed to their endeavour, they could not escape expansion. The desire for practical solutions, the need for immediate profits, and the very urge for survival dictated growth. With each step along the way, they bound the course of Lethbridge more and more into a constantly changing financial world. The town had become a small outpost in a vast and intricate commercial empire—a link in the chain of communications that

stretched from London, New York, and Montreal. The future of Lethbridge would henceforth hinge upon the fluctuating fortunes of the financial capitals of Canada, the United States and Great Britain.

Local businessmen certainly were conscious of their vulnerable economic position. The *Lethbridge News* often urged its readers to diversify the local economy in order to escape the domination of the coal company and its unstable market. This warning, however, never dampened the cocky, optimistic confidence that the great wealth of coal was the guarantee of nearly unlimited prosperity and progress. Lethbridge, according to the *News*, would grow unremittingly because it lay near an abundant resource being vigorously exploited by foreign capitalists. Tottering dangerously on the fine line which separates gross exaggeration from outright lie, the weekly boasted, "Built upon a coal mine of practically limitless extent, whose output is and always must be in great demand as being the best steam coal in the North-West, we have a sure foundation that ensures a steady growth and prosperity for our town."¹⁵ Although several seasons had proved otherwise, the *News* crowed that neither season nor climate affected production, and it unrealistically asserted that the CPR would always continue to buy Galt coal. "So long as the boundless prairies of the North-West are traversed by railways," the editor gloated, "there shall always be a sure market for Lethbridge and our town will steadily prosper."¹⁶ As far as he was concerned, Lethbridge was bound to become an important industrial, agricultural, and commercial centre and certainly the first or second largest city in the North-West. People would be attracted by its excellent facilities, its schools and churches, its reputation for law and order.

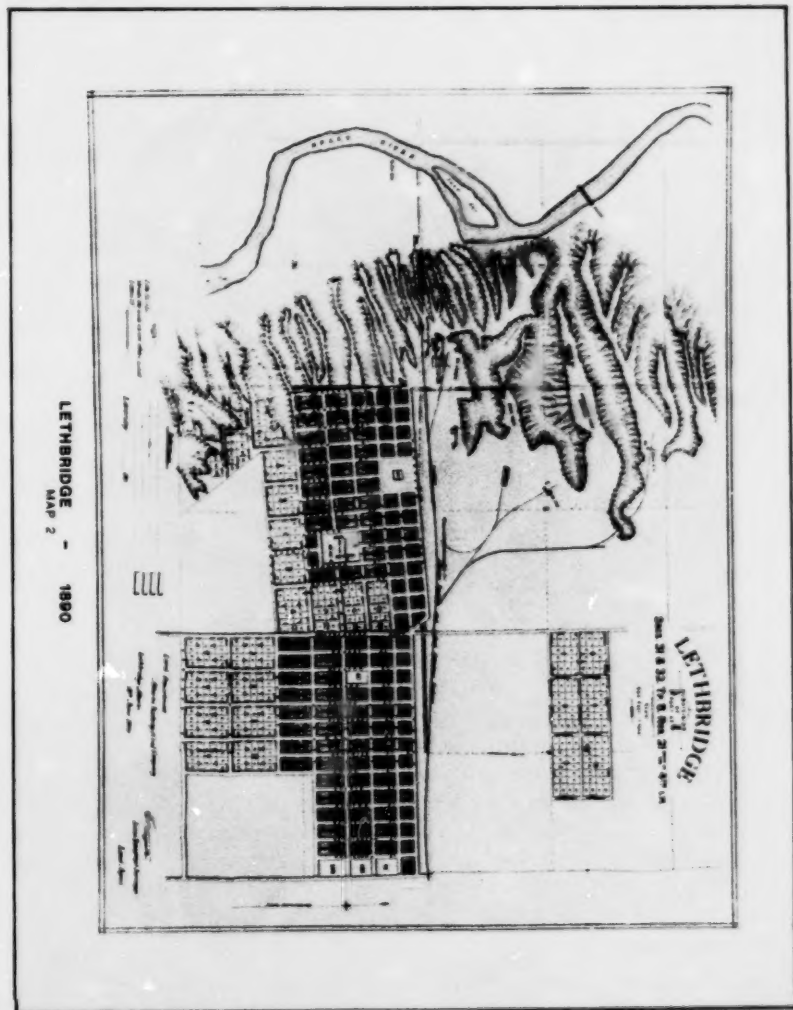
One of the requirements of the civilization and progress admired by the newspaper and its readers was municipal government. For the first four years after its inception Lethbridge merely drifted along without any formal means of local government. The announcement in 1889 of the plans for the Lethbridge-Montana railway stirred the business community into action. They wanted an efficient organization to plan and stimulate Lethbridge's growth. During September 1889 a group of men met in one of the smoky backrooms of Henderson's Hotel and formed the Lethbridge Board of Trade. Although the Board did lobby the federal government for such public works as a court house and land office, its primary aim was to seek the incorporation of Lethbridge as a town. The charter members elected C. A. Magrath as their first president, a choice which he felt "turned out an excellent move, as it brought about a contact that grew into a harmonious and active co-operation between the citizens of Lethbridge and the Company for the development of the district which was of great moment to both."¹⁷ By June 1890 Magrath and a small

committee had worked out the details of incorporation and set the initial taxation rates.¹⁸

The major disadvantage of incorporation was the matter of taxes, and its advocates had to convince the public that municipal government would bring marvellous improvements to the town and personal prosperity to its citizens. In other words, the ultimate goal was worth the small tax levy. The editor of the *News*, himself a member of the board of trade, noted that incorporation was a necessary step in the settlement's evolution because only a town council could introduce stability and organization to the amorphous collection of houses and people. A municipal government could build the sidewalks, sorely needed when rains transformed the dusty streets into impossible quagmires; it could rid the town of the putrid garbage, rotting carcasses and stale ashes strewn about the streets. Only a town council could offer bonuses to attract the manufacturers and industrialists needed for the town's growth. It could provide a water distribution system which would not only reduce the cost of water but provide fire protection and thus drastically reduce high insurance premiums.¹⁹ In sum, the taxes, which were to be set low, were justified, the paper argued, because local government would make Lethbridge a more attractive place for businessmen to come to and live in; incorporation was the essential step to ensure expansion to metropolitan status.

Despite the paper's impassioned arguments, the average Lethbridgean responded with a decided lack of enthusiasm. A referendum, held in July 1890, attracted only a small crowd of supporters. The low turnout angered the *News*.²⁰ Charles Magrath, however, was undeterred by the public's apathy and late in August he secured the territorial government's permission to incorporate Lethbridge. On 29 December 1890 another small number of voters approved the plan of incorporation. At this time the *News* explained that the workmen, "feeling sure there would be no opposition did not take the trouble to go to the poll."²¹ Coupled with the fact that incorporation made little difference to the economic welfare of most miners or railwaymen, the weekly's explanation was reasonable. The indifference of labour contrasted sharply with the activity shown by the town's middle-class and revealed the growing gap between these two groups. The aspirations of both segments of the community differed greatly as the worker did not share the merchant's dream of major metropolitan status for the town.

Early in January 1891 the newly incorporated town held its first municipal elections and chose Charles Magrath as mayor. Magrath, who was "closely identified with all the movements which wanted to advance and develop the town,"²² firmly believed that the good of southern Alberta, the town, and the company were inseparable. In his



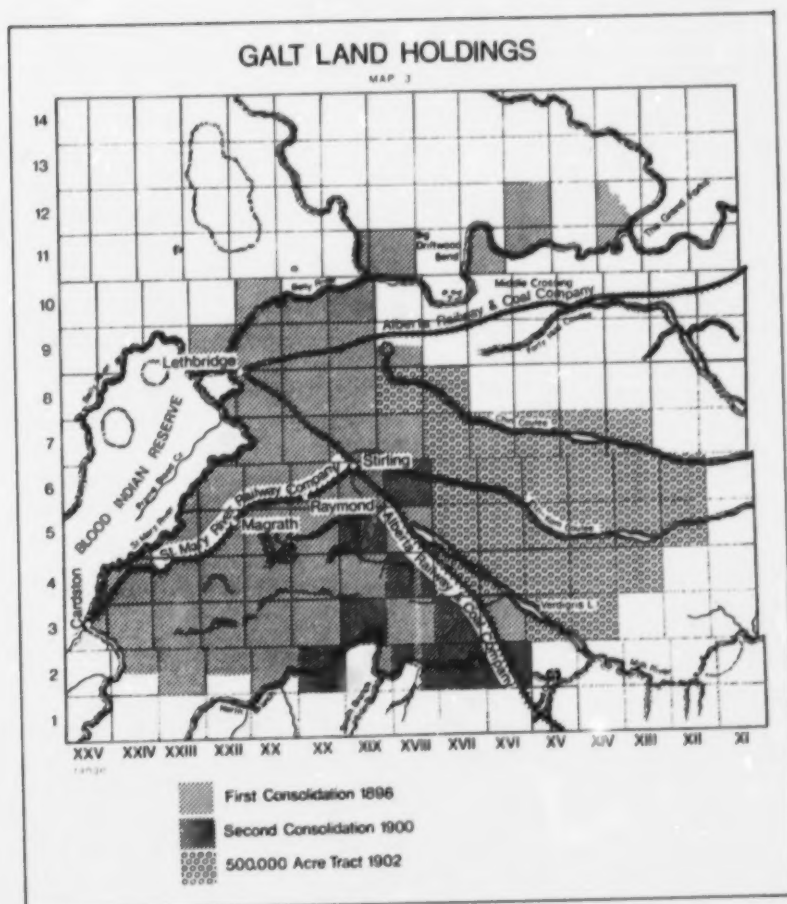
inaugural address the mayor stressed the friendly relations between town and company.²³ Although Magrath did not mention that at Elliott Galt's insistence the board of trade had granted the AR&CCo a twenty-year tax exemption, he did laud his employer's contribution to Lethbridge's economy. He fearlessly predicted that the abundant supply of energy, combined with a future railway to the minerals of the Crow's Nest Pass, would attract smelting and reduction industries to Lethbridge, while nearby sandstone, clay and water would lure other factories as well. In short, the newly elected mayor was confident that because a progressive firm was developing the region's great coal reserves, Lethbridge would soon outstrip Winnipeg in size and become a leading industrial city.

Although Magrath's speech displayed a naive loyalty to his employer, it did touch on an important truth. Unlike most mine owners, Galt had rejected the closed-camp concept with its company-owned stores, company-built houses, schools and churches, and company-run local government. This policy opened the way for the rise of a small, local middle class which soon sought to transform a drab mining camp into a thriving commercial centre with its own inherent potential for future growth. Shopkeepers, aided by company officials and a few professionals, worked together to create a prosperous and dynamic community; they wanted to build a major industrial city and an entrepôt for a miniature commercial empire in southern Alberta. Theirs was a vision spawned by the abundant coal and soil resources of their region and made possible by the modern techniques of railways, mining and business.

III

By 1890 the AR&CCo was the only significant producer of coal in the prairie region. By slashing its prices in order to retain the CPR contract, the company had virtually eliminated all Canadian competition. It had been able to maintain these low prices because it received revenues from its two railways and because it could use its large land grants as security for the capital needed to build and operate a large and efficient colliery. The failure of several small prairie mines during the previous five years had clearly proven that even if the region's coal resources were vast, their exploitation was no simple proposition but required careful planning, ample financing, and technical expertise.²⁴

The AR&CCo's hegemony in the Northwest did not last long. In 1892 the H. W. McNeill mine at Canmore began to supply coal to the CPR on a regular basis. To meet this serious threat, Elliott Galt worked out an agreement with the CPR whereby the railway agreed to lease the Dunmore-Lethbridge railway, to purchase it in 1897, and to sign a long-term coal contract.²⁵ The AR&CCo broadened its rail



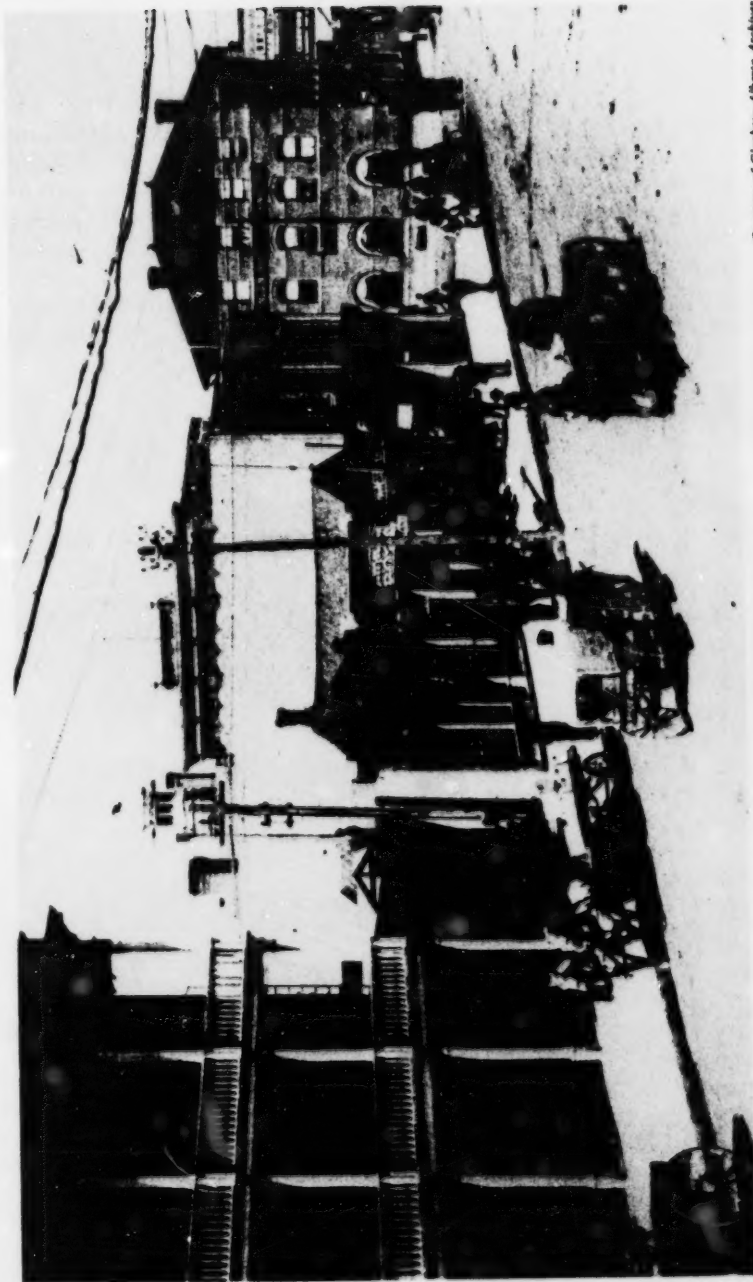
gauge to accept the transcontinental's rolling stock, and on 25 November 1893 the first CPR train rolled into Lethbridge. The locomotive's piercing whistle signalled the beginning of the end of the Galt influence in southern Alberta.

The agreement did not alleviate the uncertainty of the CPR purchases of AR&CCo coal. Not only did the railway's demand fluctuate with the yearly seasons but it began to buy more and more coal from the McNeill company. In 1894 the CPR instructed Galt to reduce his coal shipments because it needed less coal than agreed to in the contract. When he protested, the company's vice-president insisted that a railway's fuel contract was never to be "construed in an iron-clad

fashion."²⁶ It was a serious blow to Galt who was already in deep financial trouble. A mortgage company had taken control over the Dunmore line in anticipation of impending bankruptcy. Only a complete rearrangement of the AR&CCo's capitalization, brilliantly executed by Elliott Galt, late in 1894, saved the company.²⁷ He also worked out an arrangement whereby the CPR began to store some coal in order to reduce to some extent the wild seasonal fluctuations of its fuel demand.²⁸

Storing coal was but a stopgap measure; the only effective remedy for the critically sick company appeared to be still further expansion, particularly in its land department. Here, too, the AR&CCo encountered serious obstacles. It had accepted its railway subsidies in the semi-arid south because it intended to sell the land to ranchers, a policy which failed because it could not compete with the federal grazing leases or the American ranching boom. In 1891, when the AR&CCo had sold only a fraction of its holdings, it negotiated an agreement with the Mormon church whereby the church agreed to purchase 720,000 acres of land and provide the labour to build an irrigation system for the area.²⁹ The gigantic scheme was premature, however. The company's British directors were reluctant to invest in the expensive technology of irrigation when millions of free homesteads were still available in the more humid regions. All appeals for federal assistance fell on deaf ears because the politicians were afraid that irrigation talk could produce rumours that the entire Northwest was a desert and unsuitable for settlement.³⁰ Without private backing or government support, the Mormon church withdrew its offer and the immense project, so optimistically conceived, was shelved.

The federal government could not maintain its anti-irrigation stand for long. The prolonged drought, which lingered in southern Alberta during the 1880s and 1890s, created the nagging fear that dryness was the prevailing feature of the southwest. Settlers, haunted by the spectre of failure, blamed the government for leading them to a sterile region. With their emotions whipped up by the regional press, local boards of trade, and even federal officials stationed on the prairies, the colonists joined in an angry campaign for relief. The government had to react, albeit reluctantly and slowly. In 1894 it passed legislation which regulated prairie water resources, and it also authorized a survey of several southern Alberta rivers to ascertain the feasibility of irrigation and control its application.³¹ Two years later, a faltering Conservative administration exchanged a portion of the AR&CCo's land grant for a half-million acre parcel southeast of the St. Mary River. The company wanted to consolidate some of its holdings into a single block so that its still projected irrigation canal



Courtesy of Glenbow-Alberta Archives

ROUND STREET, LETHBRIDGE (1890s) looks remarkably similar to other prairie mainstreets.

need not cross crown, school or private lands.³² This unprecedented departure from federal land policy was an important concession enhancing the practicality of the irrigation scheme.

For the time being, however, the project remained economically unfeasible and Lethbridge remained dependent upon the collieries and retained all the characteristics of a coal town. Its migratory population with its predominance of males (see Table I) produced a boisterous, lusty society accentuated by the nature of coal mining. One of the most conspicuous manifestations of the town's masculinity was a prominently displayed red light district sporting several gaudily painted brothels perched on one of the promontories jutting out of the steep river bank just south of the mine shafts.³³ Gambling was

TABLE I

SEXES OF LETHBRIDGE POPULATION, 1901-1911

Sex	1901	1906	1911
Male	1,213	1,247	4,462
Female	859	1,066	3,588
Total	2,072	2,313	8,050

SOURCES: *Census of Canada, 1901, 1911; Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1906.*

TABLE II

RELIGIONS OF LETHBRIDGE POPULATION, 1901 AND 1911

Religions	1901 ^{a)}	1911
Presbyterian	616	2,213
Anglican	420	1,943
Roman Catholic	612	938
Methodists	256	1,451
Baptists	100	348
Greek Church	14	103
Lutherans	30	366
Other	278	688
Total	2,326	8,050

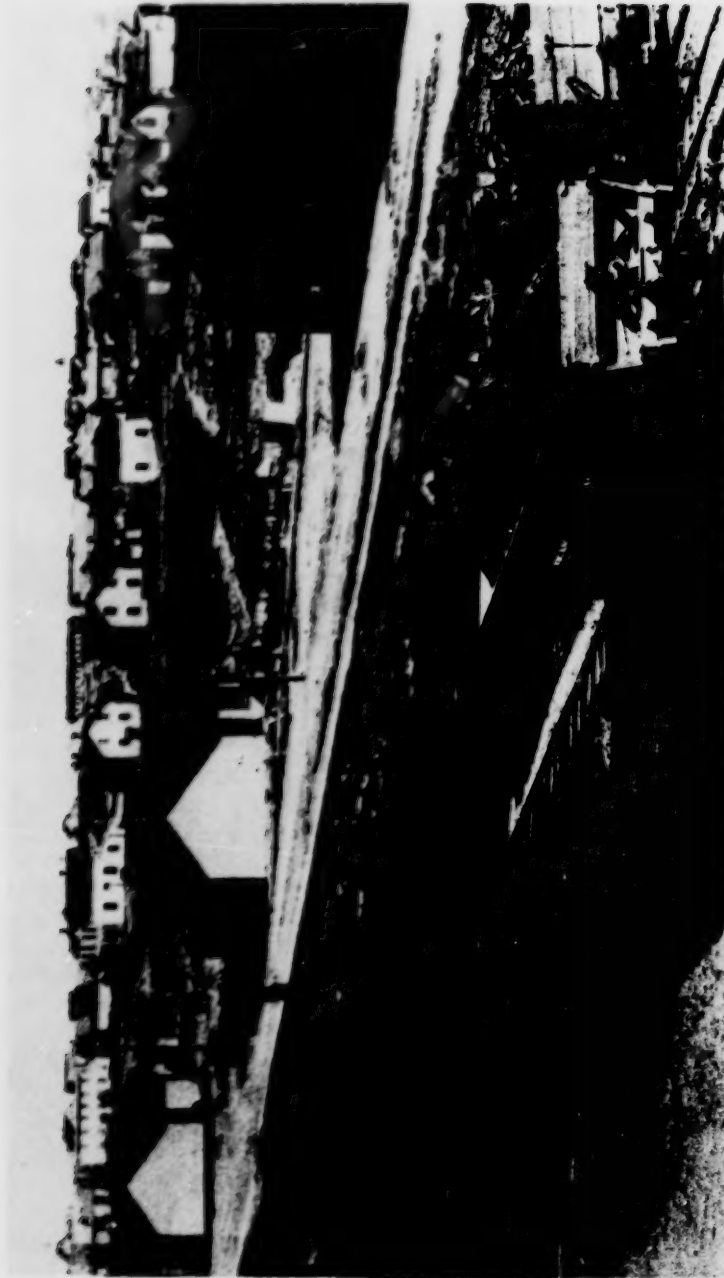
Note: a) Based on figures for the census sub-districts of Lethbridge, North and Lethbridge, South, rather than for the Town/City of Lethbridge.

SOURCES: *Censuses of Canada, 1901, 1911.*

commonplace, conducted in a relatively professional manner in the saloons or hotel backrooms, more informally at prize fights or horse races, and most commonly in the miners' shanties. The police kept a casual eye on these activities and occasionally ran a particularly obnoxious individual out of town.³⁴ The town council, ignoring its own morals by-law, tacitly approved the mounted police's policy of supervision rather than strict enforcement. The police also overlooked violation of the territorial liquor ordinance because government inspectors were supposed to enforce it. The inspectorate was lax, however, and in Lethbridge virtually non-existent. Consequently, its retail stores openly sold alcohol while its hotels contained noisy saloons with no regard for closing hours. The mounted police were loath to close the bars, obviously a highly unpopular task, especially when it fell outside their jurisdiction.³⁵ As a result alcohol flowed freely in Lethbridge, notably on weekends when many miners seemed bent on spending their entire pay in one boozy whirl of revelling.

Not everyone approved of this lax law enforcement policy. In 1894, the Methodist and Presbyterian pastors called for a public meeting to discuss the "flagrant violations of the law relating to liquor-selling, gambling and public morals."³⁶ Since public entertainment was never abundant in Lethbridge, a large crowd turned out and with great amusement heard the ministers angrily instruct the town council to rid the community of these evils, particularly the "soiled doves." The "soiled doves," however, had sent a lawyer to the meeting and he rather forcefully argued that only the federal government was the rightful guardian of public morality and that therefore complaints had to be sworn before a justice of the peace who could prosecute under dominion statutes. Everyone, except the clergy, accepted this as sound advice. The town council, always eager to save money whenever it could, decided to leave the matter with the police.³⁷ This was precisely what the police commander wanted. "If they [the parsons] would turn their attention to the juvenile depravity and promiscuous fornication that is going on under their own eyes and in their own congregations," he fumed, "they would be kept so busy that they would have no time to think of the professional ladies, who at all events are orderly, clean, and on the whole not bad looking."³⁸

The local newspaper tended to blame the town's rowdy behaviour on the many central and southern Europeans (see Table III) living north of the railway tracks. In one editorial the *News* expressed the apathy and fear with which the Anglo-Saxons viewed the immigrants. "Many of them," the *News* warned, "bring hatred of Government, hatred of liberty, and hatred of humanity."³⁹ The remark, written at the opening of a new school in Lethbridge, laid bare the basic fear that the strange Europeans threatened the establishment of British cultural values in western Canada.



The uniqueness of LETHBRIDGE is illustrated by this 1890 view of coal cars parked near several company-owned miner's houses.
Courtesy of Glenbow-Alberta Archives

TABLE III

ORIGINS OF LETHBRIDGE POPULATION, 1901 AND 1911

Origin	1901 ^{a)}	1911
British	1,572	5,841
French	105	107
German	74	385
Scandinavian	69	258
Dutch	4	109
Russian ^{a)}	428	411
Other European	22	107
Asian	30	111
Indian ^{c)}	11	18
Other	11	703
Total	2,326	8,050

Notes: a) Includes Austro-Hungarians.

b) These are figures for census sub-districts of Lethbridge, North and Lethbridge, South.

c) For 1911 the designation "half-breed" was dropped. Figures for 1901 include both Indians and Métis. Census instructions for 1911 are unclear as to whether or not Métis are included in the "Indian" category.

SOURCES: *Censuses of Canada, 1901, 1911.*

The *News* and its readers, fearing the erosion of cultural institutions, evinced a strong concern for the education of children. They shared the belief of other English-speaking Westerners that the public schools could eradicate the undesirable characteristics of the hundreds of Europeans coming to the Northwest annually, and could teach their children the basic moral and civic standards of Canada. The school, then, became the essential social institution in the Northwest, the tool to set the future temperament of Canada. In its usual purple prose, the *News* concluded that "the public schools are the incandescent light that will illuminate the houses of the land."⁴⁰

Since Lethbridgeans considered the school to be of prime importance, they were willing to spend money on it. Early in 1891 the town's schoolboard closed its five-year-old wooden structure and opened a two-storey brick edifice with six classrooms. The Gothic structure, centred on four town lots, was typically ornate with its stone facings and window sills, its imposing double door entrance, and its tower complete with belfry. In addition to this major project the board also built a small schoolhouse that same year in the north ward, where most of the immigrants lived, so that no children needed to be deprived of an education because of the long walk and danger of crossing a busy railway yard.⁴¹ Obviously, the community believed that the cost of instilling the many newcomers with Canadian values was a worthy investment.

The townsmen were less willing to spend money on other amenities. Caught in the prevailing economic depression, the town council prided itself on keeping taxes to a minimum; it endeavoured to spend as little as possible and to pay its debts promptly. Improvements (sidewalks, for example) were built gradually. In 1891 private citizens, not the town, erected street lights and a telephone network. Even such a basic service as a hospital was built by Sir Alexander and donated to the town. In fact, the economic symbiosis between town and company, coupled with the veneration of the patriarchal Galt, became a crucial factor in the attitude of Lethbridge's citizenry. The majority of its inhabitants were content to let the AR&CCo provide basic services and stimulate regional development. While a few leaders lustily cheered the efforts of the Galts and supported, for example, their bid for government irrigation subsidies, they were unwilling to spend much money on this enterprise themselves. Everyone heartily agreed that Lethbridge must diversify its economic base in order to escape the dominance of the Galt company, but few were willing to levy upon themselves the requisite taxes. When the prevailing economic depression discouraged major outside investment in Lethbridge, local businessmen were unable to translate their ambitious vision for the town into concrete action.

Consequently, by 1896 Lethbridge was little more than a coal mine and railway town where people threw their garbage behind their houses and their ashes on the streets. Even though its leaders continually prophesied that within years Lethbridge would be the largest city on the prairies, in reality cows, chickens and even pigs roamed its roads at will. The dream of major metropolitan status was still alive, but while Lethbridgeans waited for wealthy capitalists to recognize their town's industrial potential, the realization of the vision grew more remote with every passing year.

IV

The election of Wilfrid Laurier's Liberals to office in 1896 symbolized the dawn of a new era for Canada, particularly for the prairies and southern Alberta. As the gloom of depression dissipated before the optimism of economic boom, the Northwest began to compete more successfully for a larger share of the growing stream of immigrants to North America. The resultant rapid advance of prairie settlement enhanced the feasibility of Elliott Galt's irrigation project. Not only did land values rise but the CPR extension through the Crow's Nest Pass opened a market for agricultural products in the mining regions of the pass and the Kootenays. Perhaps the most direct stimulus to the irrigation scheme came from Clifford Sifton, the new minister of the interior. Sifton, an ardent advocate of progress and



Courtesy of Glenbow-Alberta Archives

WOODEN IRRIGATION FLUME with Lethbridge in the background, 1900.

efficiency, discounted the fears of bad publicity associated with irrigation and promised to refund the survey dues which the AR&CCo had paid on its land grant, a sum of about \$100,000.⁴² The AR&CCo also received a grant of \$100,000 from the CPR based on the increased revenues which the railway expected to realize on the Dunmore line because of irrigation.⁴³

All these factors appeared to make the irrigation enterprise feasible. Elliott Galt reopened the negotiations with the Mormon Church and his English associates. By December 1897 he had worked out a contract whereby the church undertook to supply all the labour to dig the canal in return for payment of one-half in cash and one-half in land.⁴⁴ In June 1898 the directors of the AR&CCo agreed to finance the \$600,000 project; they formed the Canadian North-west Irrigation Company to purchase from the AR&CCo the requisite lands and build the irrigation works.⁴⁵ Construction of the 115-mile canal, which tapped the St. Mary River near the international boundary, was begun in August 1898 and completed in July 1900.

Ironically, in the first few years heavy rainfalls impaired land sales. Moreover, few settlers had enough money to buy the relatively expensive irrigated lands and water rights.⁴⁶ Not until the more usual dry weather returned and not until more and more colonists scrambled for the rapidly-shrinking acres of uncultivated prairies, did the Lethbridge area offer a profitable alternative to dryland farms.

Throughout the next five years, Elliott Galt continued to expand his influence in southern Alberta. Every summer he improved the flow of the canal and extended its reach. He also built a railway to Cardston, widened the Canadian portion of the Montana railway and sold the American section to the Great Northern. He subsidized a sugar beet factory at Raymond and an experimental farm at Lethbridge. Developments were less extensive at the collieries because too many companies were taking advantage of the rapid influx of population onto the prairies, causing a measure of overproduction. Despite the disappointing coal output, the overall performance of his operations was so successful that Galt was able to arrange the merger of his various Lethbridge ventures into one company, the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company [AR&I], capitalized at \$8,750,000.⁴⁷ The relatively small coal mine had grown into a railway, irrigation, and colonization company.

The creation of the AR&I signalled the retirement of Galt from active involvement in the business. The board of directors appointed a professional manager to administer the daily affairs of the company. In 1912 they sold a majority of their shares to the CPR, which was itself involved in large-scale irrigation in Alberta. The AR&I became a subsidiary of the transcontinental, controlled by its Natural Resources

Branch.⁴⁸ The drive for expansion, activated by the search for efficiency, had moved the Galt company into the corporate empire of the CPR.

The transition from coal to irrigation company radically transformed the physical landscape of the region. The settlers, attracted to the irrigated lands, recast the open grasslands into cultivated fields, their former expansiveness interrupted by fences, barns and houses. Small towns cropped up along the company's railway tracks. Formerly trees and bushes had grown only in the cool shelter of the river valleys, but irrigation made possible streets lined with trees, and houses adorned with shrubbery.

The rapid expansion of the company's operations and the marked improvement in the economy after the mid-1890s had a profound psychological impact upon the town's business establishment, a mood they shared with their colleagues across the prairies. Lethbridge came alive and, as the empty buildings which had plagued it for years were filled to overflowing, the town cheerfully endured a shortage of skilled builders. The *Lethbridge Herald*, the municipality's second weekly, noted the direct relationship between the farmers, who were filling the countryside, and the growth of Lethbridge: "The settlement of the lands in the vicinity, which is taking place steadily . . . will bring grist to the cash boxes of our stores and compel them to enlarge and employ more hands."⁴⁹ The prospect of increased "grist" in their cash boxes was a prime factor in revitalizing the exhilarating spirit of economic progress which the merchants had lost during the economic stagnancy of the early 1890s. They eagerly joined the wild scramble for a share of the West's booming prosperity and they spurred their municipal council to abandon its cautious fiscal policy and borrow funds for lavish public works and bonuses to attract industries.

At the first the town council's rekindled interests were directed towards the advancement of railways and irrigation because both endeavours promised to lessen the town's dependence upon the coal mines. During the summer of 1897 Harry Bentley, then the town's mayor, spent several months in Ottawa lobbying the government to require the CPR to commence its Crow's Nest Pass extension at Lethbridge. In 1899 the council issued a \$30,000 debenture to pay for a bonus to the irrigation company to extend its canal into Lethbridge. In 1905 it granted the CPR and the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company a twenty-year tax exemption on their railway properties, as well as free water, in exchange for making Lethbridge a divisional point complete with a large station. With all this activity the town's budget doubled within an eight-year period stretching from 1897 to 1904. The municipal debt soared from a cautious, manageable \$10,000 in 1899 to a heedless, costly \$164,000 only four years later.⁵⁰ The

reckless spending, encouraged by the boom mentality rife among the business establishment, did make the community a more attractive place to live, but it also led it into financial difficulties which were not resolved until the establishment of a managerial system of government in 1928.

Most of the town's heavy expenditures were for material things, for miles of sidewalk, fire fighting equipment, school buildings, sewers, and road maintenance. The town council, however, did not accept financial responsibility for law enforcement until 1902. It spent nothing on recreational facilities, set aside but a minimal grant to the company hospital, tried to avoid responsibility for epidemics, and approached cautiously an attempt to acquire a Carnegie-funded library. Like many of its western counterparts, it bid furiously against other towns to attract a brewery or a flour mill but was very frugal when a destitute family appealed for help. The favourite form of welfare was a railway ticket to Montana. Determined to surpass Calgary and Edmonton in size, the town council measured its spending in accordance with the norms of growth. Its standards were entirely commercial; it laboured energetically for all things that were profitable.⁵¹

By 1906, when Lethbridge was legally incorporated as a city, it was taking on more and more the trappings of a modern urban centre. A motley array of business establishments stalwartly lined the town square. Several large three-storey brick buildings, such as the functional Bentley block, had replaced the more modest wooden structures. The Hudson's Bay Company had just completed a new store with modern showcase windows. The streets might still be gravel, but in the business section the sidewalks were solid cement. Most of the homes that sprawled across the prairies to the south of the commercial district were linked into the water and sewer system, connected to the telephone network, and hooked into an electrical plant. Lethbridgeans were convinced that their town possessed all the amenities of modern civilization. They proudly applauded their city council's decision to build an electric streetcar system to whisk Lethbridge's three thousand citizens around town.

Yet, it was sometimes difficult to erase the vestiges of an unglamorous past. In the summer of 1906 the *Herald* complained about the many cows and calves tramping through the streets in the mornings before the town herder took them to pasture. The animals were ruining the newly-planted trees but, what was more important, Lethbridge was being made to look like a small country town. Surely, the *Herald* fumed, people must see "the absolute foolishness of Lethbridge pretending to be a city when it has roaming about its streets a herd of cattle—a mark of village life?"⁵²

The remarks were appropriate because, as a result of irrigation, Lethbridge was becoming an agricultural centre. A casual stroll through the business district would reveal this change in the community's orientation. Perhaps the largest establishment was Bentley Co. Ltd., one of Lethbridge's founding companies, a thriving wholesale and retail firm in all manner of dry goods, groceries and hardware with one large store and two warehouses in the city and branches in the Crow's Nest Pass. Another thriving firm was that of George Rogers, a large wholesaler in lumber with outlets in Raymond, Magrath, Stirling and Taber. Rogers was also an agent for the Massey Harris farm implement company. Another outside establishment was the Winnipeg-based firm of A. Macdonald & Co., with two general goods shops in Lethbridge serving the city and specializing in the ranch trade. In sum, a variety of stores, banks, dealers, artisans and teamsters made up the elements of a service station for the growing agricultural hinterland.

Lethbridge in 1906 was a strange creation. One pamphlet called it a coal city in a wheat country. It was an apt description because the wealth of coal beneath its streets was still vital to its economic health. Although the miners had their own co-operative stores, the merchants of Lethbridge still provided many commodities and services to the coal workers and the collieries. Lethbridge therefore experienced all the effects of industrialization. The mines brought with them an ebullient, lusty population, basically masculine in character, largely foreign in origin. Some of the workers sought their amusement in the commercial places of the city, the brothels, saloons and gambling rooms. Yet these establishments also served the men from the surrounding farms and ranches. Moreover, the city's regular wholesale and retail outlets attracted customers from the countryside. Thus Lethbridge was also a product of the rapidly-growing agricultural population. Within the city's society were conjoined the experience of an old agrarian tradition and the portents of a new industrial state.

The agricultural tradition remained predominant, however. The expansion of the coal mines and irrigation canals and the transformation of the region into an agrarian economy did not stimulate the growth of Lethbridge as much as some of its boosters desired. Despite their valiant efforts the city did not attract the industries it so desperately wanted. While Sick's Brewery, the Lethbridge Iron Works, and Ellison's Milling and Elevator Company did settle in Lethbridge, the city's expansion lagged behind the spectacular growth of Calgary and Edmonton. The introduction of hard spring wheat to the region did spark a land rush in 1910 which stimulated the city's construction industry, but by 1916 the gap had not closed appreciably. Obviously, Lethbridge with its small geographical



This view of the FIRST LARGE SHAFT MINE on the prairies was taken shortly after 1900. Note the third line to accommodate the older, narrow gauge trains.
Courtesy of Gail Muecum, Leithridge

hinterland a hundred miles removed from the CPR main line had to be content with a minor commercial role in southern Alberta. Since it did not have the high-quality coal required by heavy industries, or a nearby market for their produce, Lethbridge did not become the large industrial metropolis so proudly predicted by its leaders. In fact, it became a relatively small and pleasant marketing and distribution centre for southern Alberta communities like Cardston, Stirling, Magrath and Taber. The city's leadership had embraced the settled world's vision of economic progress, but it had been unable to overcome the real forces of the complex commercial empire of which they were only an outpost.

NOTES

- ¹ Public Record Office, Articles of Association of the North Western Coal and Navigation Company Limited, document 2, 25 April 1882.
- ² Public Archives of Canada [PAC], Department of the Interior Records, vol. 53, Galt to Burgess, 7 October 1882; Canada, Department of the Interior, *Annual Report 1882*, p. 136.
- ³ Alexander Johnston, compiler, *Boats and Barges on the Belly River* (Lethbridge, 1966); and PAC, Magrath Papers, vol. 7, file 30, Memorandum re the construction and operation of a fleet of steamers and barges operated by the North Western Coal and Navigation Company on the Saskatchewan Rivers, signed by Macbeth, no date.
- ⁴ PAC, Macdonald Papers, vol. 220, Galt to Macdonald, 7 January 1884.
- ⁵ Canada, Orders-in-Council, 19 October 1883; 27 September 1884; 11 January 1885.
- ⁶ A. A. den Otter, "Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt, the Canadian Government and Alberta's Coal," Canadian Historical Association, *Historical Papers 1973*, pp. 21-42.
- ⁷ *Macleod Gazette*, 27 October 1885.
- ⁸ R. Burton Deane, *Mounted Police Life in Canada: A Record of Thirty-One Year's Service* (London, 1916; facsimile, Toronto, 1973).
- ⁹ John D. Higinbotham, *When the West Was Young: Historical Reminiscences of the Early Canadian West* (Toronto, 1933).
- ¹⁰ The attitude and views of the Lethbridge News are discussed in greater detail in A. A. den Otter, *Civilizing the West: The Galts and the Development of Western Canada* (forthcoming).
- ¹¹ PAC, Shaughnessy Letterbooks, vol. 10, Shaughnessy to Whyte, 10 February 1887. The letter indicates that Galt's original price was already advantageous for the CPR.
- ¹² PAC, Galt Letterbook, Galt to Lethbridge, 29 March 1886; Canada, Department of the Interior, *Annual Report 1886*, p. 22; Galt Museum, Lethbridge, GM 973.5188-GM 973.5161, Galt to Stafford, 23 February 1886.
- ¹³ PAC, Macdonald Papers, vol. 220, Galt to Macpherson, 21 May 1885; Galt Letterbook, Galt to Conrad, 17 October 1885; Galt to Barclay, 22 December 1885.
- ¹⁴ Canada, *Commons Debates*, 27 March 1888, 19 May 1888, 22 and 23 February, 1 May 1899; Order-in-Council, 31 May 1888, 11 March 1890; *Statutes*, 53 Victoria, chapter 85, 26 March 1890.
- ¹⁵ *Lethbridge News*, 5 July 1888.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ C. A. Magrath, *The Galts, Father and Son: Pioneers in the Development of Southern Alberta* (Lethbridge, 1936).
- ¹⁸ PAC, Magrath Papers, vol. 4, file 27, Extracts from the Minutes of the Board of Trade, 17 April, 3 June 1890.
- ¹⁹ *Lethbridge News*, 9 July 1890.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 23 July 1890.
- ²¹ *Lethbridge Semi-Weekly News*, 20 January 1891.
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ City of Lethbridge, City Clerk's Office, file 1891, Inaugural Address.
- ²⁴ A. A. den Otter, "Railways and Alberta's Coal Problem, 1880-1960," in A. W. Rasporich, ed., *Western Canada: Past and Present* (Calgary, 1975), pp. 84-98.
- ²⁵ PAC, Shaughnessy Letterbooks, vol. 32, Shaughnessy to Whyte, 2 August 1892; *Ibid.*, vol. 35, Shaughnessy to Galt, 27 February 1893; Memorandum for the lease and purchase of the Dunmore-Lethbridge Railway to the Canadian Pacific Railway, 4 July 1893.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 40, Shaughnessy to Whyte, 14 August 1894; also Shaughnessy to Galt, 31 August 1894.

- ²⁷ Canada, *Statutes*, 39 Victoria, chapter 45, 28 June 1895; *The Stock Exchange Official Intelligence* 1902 (London, 1902), p. 285.
- ²⁸ PAC, Shaughnessy Letterbooks, vol. 41, Shaughnessy to Whyte, 25 January, 18 April, 20 October 1896.
- ²⁹ Glenbow-Alberta Institute, NWC & NCo Papers, file 9, statement of railway lands grants and coal lands, 12 November 1890; file 3, undated report on land sales to 31 December 1889; Jacobsen Project, file 234, Charles Ora Card, p. 9.
- ³⁰ University of Alberta Archives, Pearce Papers, box 8, no. 3-35, Burgess to Pearce, 21 January 1891.
- ³¹ Canada, Department of the Interior, *Annual Report 1895*, Part III, p. 35.
- ³² Canada, Order-in-Council, 18 January 1896.
- ³³ James H. Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies* (Toronto, 1971).
- ³⁴ PAC, RCMP Records, RG 18, A-1, vol. 104, no. 131, Lethbridge monthly report, 31 December 1898.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 91, no. 148, 30 November 1894; *Lethbridge News*, 6 and 13 January 1892; also James H. Gray, *Booze: The Impact of Whiskey on the Prairies* (Toronto, 1972).
- ³⁶ City of Lethbridge, Town Council Minutes, 21 May 1894.
- ³⁷ J. H. Carpenter, *The Badge and the Blotter: A History of the Lethbridge Police* (Lethbridge, 1975), pp. 11-13.
- ³⁸ PAC, RCMP Records, RG 18, A-1, vol. 91, no. 148, Lethbridge Monthly Report, 31 July 1894.
- ³⁹ *Lethbridge Semi-Weekly News*, 27 March 1891.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 6 January 1891, and 18 November 1891.
- ⁴² PAC, Magrath Papers, vol. 10, file 51, Memorandum: The Beginning of Irrigation in a Large Way in Southern Alberta, dated April 1942; Canada, Order-in-Council, 6 January, 1898.
- ⁴³ PAC, Shaughnessy Letterbooks, vol. 56, Shaughnessy to Galt, 5 January 1898.
- ⁴⁴ GAI, NWC&NCo Papers, Galt to Sifton, 15 December 1897; PAC, Magrath Papers, Magrath to Sifton, vol. 10, file 51, 8 November 1897; Canada, Order-in-Council, 6 January 1898.
- ⁴⁵ *The Stock Exchange Official Intelligence for 1903* (London, 1903), p. 1051.
- ⁴⁶ See, for example, University of Alberta Archives, Pearce Papers, box 19, file 9-7, Magrath to Pearce, 20 September 1900.
- ⁴⁷ Glenbow-Alberta Institute, AR&I Collection, Memorials, Canadian North-West Irrigation Company, 15 March 1900, 9 September 1902; Sam Porter and Charles Raley, "A Brief History of the Development of Irrigation in the Lethbridge District" (unpublished, type-written manuscript, Lethbridge Public Library, 1925); PAC, Magrath Papers, vol. 7, Galt to Magrath, 19 February and 18 March 1901, vol. 4, Magrath memo, 4 March 1927.
- ⁴⁸ Glenbow-Alberta Institute, AR&I Collection, Peters to Pereira, 13 April 1912.
- ⁴⁹ *Lethbridge Herald*, 27 December 1905.
- ⁵⁰ Lethbridge, City Clerk's Office, Railway File, 1897; Town Council Minute Book, 12 December 1898; 27 January 1899; Bylaws 103, 107 and 108; and Statements of receipts and expenditures for the years 1897, 1899, 1904.
- ⁵¹ The assertions in this paragraph were gleaned from the minutes of the town council (1891-1906), the *Lethbridge News* (1891-1905), and the *Lethbridge Herald* (1905-1906). The minute books relate the bareboned decisions while the newspapers provide the underlying thoughts behind these judgments. In its general attitude the Lethbridge council was remarkably similar to that of Calgary. See M. L. Foran, "The Calgary Town Council, 1884-1895: A Study of Local Government in a Frontier Environment," M.A. Thesis (University of Calgary, 1970); and Foran, *Calgary: An Illustrated History* (Toronto, 1978), Chapter One.
- ⁵² *Lethbridge Herald*, 26 July 1906.



PART THREE

**THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH
OF CITIES**

Introduction

The complexity of cities has long been recognized by students of urbanization patterns, but few widely accepted generalizations about their origins and patterns of growth have been generated. This lack of generalization—an inability to operate at the aggregate level of cities as a general phenomenon—stems from many causes, including disagreement over terms and approaches, widely varying and dispersed data bases, and the relative newness of the field of urban history. In recent years, of course, some progress toward the goal of a general history of the Canadian city has been made; certainly we are far advanced beyond the elementary nature of the field as outlined by H. J. Dyos or J. M. S. Careless in 1968.¹ There is, at least, agreement that general insights and approaches are necessary for the progress of the subject.² Yet progress has not been steady or even, and in Canada we have yet to produce any general histories of urbanization similar to those completed in the United States³. The closest we have come to date are several collections of articles and thematic studies.⁴

There is, however, agreement among students of western history that one of the most spectacular developments in the pre-1914 prairie West was the emergence of the large city.⁵ In 1900, with the exception of Winnipeg, it was not altogether clear which prairie towns would expand to become cities. By 1914, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton, and Saskatoon had joined Winnipeg as the region's dominant cities. By this date, too, Vancouver had emerged as a major metropolitan centre on the Pacific coast.⁶ The growth of prairie cities was a response both to massive rural settlement and the rise of villages and towns, for just as farmers needed service centres, so in turn towns needed cities. Large cities performed a variety of specialized functions. They acted as central shipping and distribution points and were the location of such key facilities as railway marshalling yards, roundhouses, locomotive shops, grain terminals, stockyards, warehouses, and wholesale businesses. Cities also provided a complex set of professional and commercial services in the offices of engineers, architects, bankers, insurance and real estate agents, doctors, lawyers, and accountants. The cities were the main repositories of skilled and unskilled labourers, meeting the demands of farmers, railway contractors, bush camp operators, building contractors, and even village and town councils. The cities' functions included, as well, industrial activity. By 1911,

Winnipeg was a major manufacturing centre and other western cities increased their production tremendously to manufacture commodities for the regional market. Finally, it was in the cities that the West's political and legal institutions (legislatures, court houses, government offices) and educational institutions (universities, trades schools, teachers' colleges) were located. In short, by 1914 the West had several fairly large and sophisticated cities. In a few short years these communities had compressed a century or more of eastern urban growth and, together with demographic dominance, displayed considerable power over trade patterns, communications, and development processes in the region, and exercised growing political, social and cultural influence.

Four of the articles in this section examine and analyze the reasons for the rise or decline of certain prairie cities. One common theme is the role that boosterism played and the importance this concept had for community leaders. Together, the articles by Artibise, Thomas, Gilpin, and Foran suggest that explanations of prairie urban development cannot be carried on entirely in terms of the usual factors of site and situation. Only in a very limited sense do these impersonal factors explain growth, particularly in the initial decades of urban development. The physical and economic environments are inert and unimportant until human effort is applied to them. Urban centres and regions do not grow in the organic sense of the word; they are, rather, the product of thousands of individual and group decisions. These decisions, in turn, are a product of a particular cultural milieu and reflect the biases and knowledge of the actors. And it is this milieu and these decisions which are the subject of these four articles.

The two other articles in this section, while dealing with particular case studies, also have as their goal the generation of research strategies that can lead to a broad understanding of the western city. In an original and ably argued contribution, Professor Betke asserts that while individualism was not entirely overcome in western cities by the early 1900s, independent behaviour had been sacrificed in many fields and the city and its agencies became the unit governing much individual conduct. The value of Betke's study is that it contributes significantly to our understanding of the urbanization process and it points the way toward further research.

The final article in this section deals with western Canada's oldest city. Professor Forward provides a succinct overview of Victoria's history and identifies several phases in its growth and development. This case study, while important and useful in itself, also suggests an approach that others may follow that would in time lead to a sophisticated typology of western cities. It is here suggested that Victoria has many unique characteristics. But similar studies of other

western cities are necessary to find out precisely what characteristics Victoria shares with other communities. For while there is no doubt that all cities have a distinct personality they—like people—also share many common characteristics.

NOTES

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- ² Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, "Urban History Comes of Age: A Review of Current Research," *City Magazine*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (September-October, 1977), pp. 22-36.
- ³ Among the many general histories are Charles N. Glaab and A. Theodore Brown, *A History of Urban America*, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1976); Zane L. Miller, *The Urbanization of Modern America: A Brief History* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973); Sam Bass Warner, Jr., *The Urban Wilderness: A History of the American City* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); and David R. Goldfield and Blaine A. Brownell, *Urban America: From Downtown to No Town* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979).
- ⁴ See, for example, Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979); Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, eds., *The Usable Urban Past: Politics and Planning in the Modern Canadian City* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979); George A. Nader, *Cities of Canada*, 2 volumes (Toronto: Macmillan, 1975-76); and John C. Weaver, *Shaping the Canadian City: Essays on Urban Politics and Policy, 1890-1920* (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1977).
- ⁵ Paul A. Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies, 1871-1916," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. VIII (1975), pp. 77-101; and Alan F. J. Artibise, "The Urban West: The Evolution of Prairie Towns and Cities to 1930," *Prairie Forum*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (1979), pp. 237-62.
- ⁶ Norbert MacDonald, "A Critical Growth Cycle for Vancouver, 1900-1914," in Stelter and Artibise, *The Canadian City*, pp. 142-59; and L. D. McCann, "Urban Growth in a Staple Economy: The Emergence of Vancouver as a Regional Metropolis, 1886-1914," in L. J. Evenden, ed., *Vancouver: Western Metropolis* (Victoria: University of Victoria, 1979), pp. 17-42. See also the article by R. A. J. McDonald in section one of this volume.

8.

BOOSTERISM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRAIRIE CITIES, 1871-1913

ALAN F. J. ARTIBISE

In 1871 the prairies had no urban centres. Except for a few Hudson's Bay Company posts, there was no commercial development. The population of the region, some 73,000 persons, was entirely rural. Forty years later, in 1911, the urbanization process on the prairies was well advanced. The region could boast of twelve cities with populations of over 5,000 and one, Winnipeg, with a population approaching 150,000. By this time too the region's population exceeded 1,300,000 and over 35 percent could be classified as urban. Furthermore, the general urban pattern of the prairies was firmly established by 1911, and five cities had emerged as dominant urban centres. These cities—Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Saskatoon, and Edmonton—have remained the primary urban concentrations of the region (see Tables I and II).¹

In the years before 1911 it was by no means certain that these particular communities would become the prairies' largest cities. It is, of course, unlikely that the region could have supported many more large centres since in this early period urban growth depended to a large degree on the resource base.² The rapidity and degree of urbanization was closely tied to the agricultural development of the region. Also, as geographers and economists have pointed out, such factors as locational advantage, agricultural and transportation technology, conscious federal policy in respect to the West, and general economic conditions made it probable that urban development on the prairies would follow a set pattern.³ Yet, even though all the ingredients for urban growth were present, and even though they all pointed toward a particular pattern, it was, in the final analysis, only the skill and initiative of individuals and groups that translated opportunity into reality.⁴ In other words, while the growth of prairie cities cannot be fully explained by internal factors, such as the activities of individuals and groups, neither can the growth process be explained only by impersonal or mechanistic forces. In the case of Winnipeg, for example, location theory does not necessarily provide for the emergence of a single city pattern in the Red River Valley. A more

TABLE I

POPULATIONS OF PRAIRIE CITIES, 1871-1916 (a)

City	1871	1881	1891	1901	1906	1911	1916
Winnipeg	241	7,985	25,639	42,340	90,153	136,035	163,000
Calgary	—	—	3,867	4,392	13,573	43,704	56,514
Edmonton	—	—	300 ^(b)	4,176	14,088	31,064	53,846
Regina	—	800 ^(c)	1,681 ^(d)	2,249	6,169	30,213	26,127
Saskatoon	—	—	—	113	3,011	12,004	21,048
Moose Jaw	—	—	—	1,558	6,249	13,823	16,934
Brandon	—	—	—	5,620	10,408	13,839	15,215
St. Boniface	817	1,283	1,553	2,019	5,119	7,483	11,021
Lethbridge	—	—	—	2,072	2,936	9,035	9,436
Medicine Hat	—	—	—	1,570	3,020	5,608	9,272
Prince Albert	—	—	—	1,785	3,005	6,254	6,436
Portage la Prairie	—	—	3,363	3,901	5,106	5,892	5,879

Notes: a) Population is listed according to areas as of 1916.

b) This is an approximation taken from City of Edmonton records.

c) The population of Regina in 1882-1883 was between "800 and 900 souls." See E. G. Drake, *Regina: The Queen City*, p. 22.d) *Ibid.*, p. 71.SOURCE: *Census of Prairie Provinces, 1916*.

TABLE II

RURAL AND URBAN ^(a) POPULATION GROWTH
IN PRAIRIE PROVINCES, 1871-1916
(in thousands)

	Northwest Territories		Manitoba		Total Prairies		
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	% Urban
1871	48	—	25	—	73	—	0
1881	56	—	52	10	108	10	8
1891	95	4	111	41	206	45	18
	Alberta		Saskatchewan				
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban			
1901	54	19	77	14	185	70	316
1906	127	58	209	48	228	138	564
1911	237	138	361	131	261	200	859
1916	307	189	471	176	313	241	1,091
							103
							25
							30
							35
							36

Note: a) Includes incorporated villages, towns, and cities.

SOURCES: *Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1916*; *Census of Canada, 1931, Volume 1*.

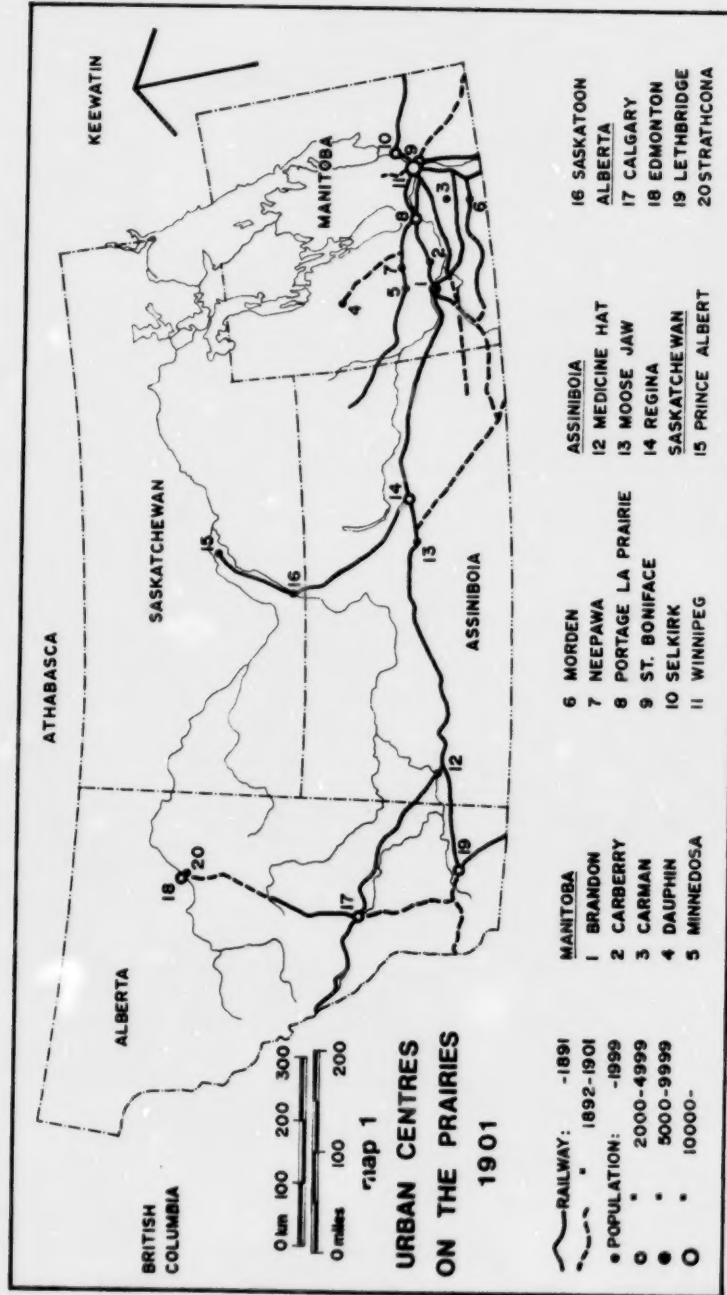
diffuse urban pattern might well have developed.⁵ The fact that such a diffuse pattern did not develop is not easily explained, but it can be said with some degree of certainty that one determining factor in the particular pattern that did emerge in Manitoba, and later in Saskatchewan and Alberta, was the initiative of civic and business leaders.

The success of one prairie city relative to another was not determined only by a convenient location or the impersonal forces of urbanization.⁶ The residents of prairie cities interacted with the environment, and their hopes, beliefs, energy, community spirit, initiative and adaptability influenced the rate of growth, degree of prosperity, and physical form of the cities. While the role of municipal governments and business organizations in altering the rate and pattern of urban development on the prairies was certainly limited by outside forces, the growth, shape, and character of the five major cities owes much to the policies devised and vigorously applied by these bodies in response to the possibilities and problems that emerged for their communities.⁷

The role individuals and groups played in shaping prairie urban development has already received some attention from those interested in the city-building process in Canada. In particular, such activities as railway promotion, immigration encouragement, industry attraction, governmental reform, municipal ownership, and efforts to attain status as both provincial capital and home of the provincial university, have been studied in some depth and will only be touched on here.⁸ But other topics—such as city incorporations, massive boundary extensions, huge public works programs, deficit financing, and land value taxation policies—have received little or no attention. It is these policies, and their impact on the development of prairie cities, that are the subject of this study.

I

An important element in an analysis of the role of individual and group activity is some understanding of the beliefs and activities of the people involved. The vast majority believed in a particular set of ideas about urban development; they shared what can be called the booster spirit, and from this mental set different ways of dealing with particular possibilities and problems emerged. Urban boosterism was both something more than a compendium of super salesmanship or mindless rhetoric, and something less than a precise ideology. It was a broad, general conception that had as its central theme the need for growth; the idea that for a city to become "better" it had to become bigger. This general notion was shared by virtually all members of the commercial classes of prairie cities, although there were, of course,



variations in the degree of attachment to the booster spirit. But what is most significant about prairie boosterism is that it existed on a plane above normal social, political, and commercial rivalries.

The vast majority of boosters were Anglo-Saxon Protestants of relatively humble origin who had come West from the small towns and cities of the Maritimes and Ontario.⁹ Before migrating, many had gained considerable experience in promoting urban growth in eastern urban centres. But the possibilities in the east were too limited for some elements, particularly, according to a British visitor in 1911, the "restless, the men who were strong and willing to dare, who saw riches around them, but beyond them, and who went West to strive, to battle, to conquer, to gain riches for themselves."¹⁰

The booster mentality was made up of a web of beliefs and attitudes, but a few stand out above the others. The most important parts of the mental baggage of the boosters were a belief in the desirability of growth and in the importance of material success.¹¹ To boosters, the challenge presented by the undeveloped prairies was to build there a prosperous, populous, and dynamic region as quickly as possible. They accepted the challenge eagerly, seeing themselves as energetic agents of improvement. They set no limits on their expectations and were intensely optimistic, expansionary, and aggressive. Their interests lay in what has been called the "architectural aspects of society"—the broad lines of its material fabric.¹² Boosters were constantly measuring their city's progress in quantitative terms—numbers of rail lines, miles of streets, dollars of assessment, size of population, value of manufacturing output or wholesale trade, and so on.

Since progress was measured in material terms, prairie boosters directed their efforts toward encouraging rapid and sustained growth in their cities at the expense of virtually all other considerations. This meant, for example, that while all prairie boosters wanted the region to grow rapidly, they were especially concerned with the growth of their own communities. Despite the early prominence of Winnipeg, the boosters of the other four cities optimistically envisioned their centre becoming the pre-eminent metropolis of the area. There was, as a result, virtually no co-operation among the five cities in their dealings with the railways, eastern industry, the federal government, or any other "outside" force.¹³ Each centre zealously competed with the others for economic advantage and prestige. Commenting on this phenomenon, one observer noted in 1915 that

[western cities had not] quite reached that secure position in which a community can afford to say unpleasant things about itself. . . . If Edmonton discovers that it has unemployment, the cry is at once 'Come to Calgary!' 'Invest in Calgary industries!' 'Buy

Calgary lots! If Calgary finds it has slum conditions, Edmonton is ready to profit by the opportunity; Regina pounces with joy on any evil spoken of Saskatoon; and the drift of capital and labour may really be affected. Therefore in each city all citizens possessing property are in a conspiracy of silence, or rather unite in so hearty a chorus on the glories of their city and district that no other sound can be heard in the neighbourhood.¹⁴

But while there was a noted lack of co-operation, and sometimes even goodwill among the five prairies cities,¹⁵ there was a high degree of co-ordination within each city among the boosters. To prairie townsmen, not to be a booster—not to be part of the team—showed both a lack of community spirit and a lack of business sense. Boosting was essential to progress and prosperity; good citizenship and boosting were synonymous.¹⁶ Successful boosting demanded both collaboration and trust in the pursuit of broad, common goals and priorities on which everyone in the community could agree. An active and positive attitude toward the community was expected and demanded of the “good citizen.” As one pioneer Saskatoon merchant put it:

All were imbued with an optimism that Saskatoon was destined to become an important centre. Newcomers in business were welcomed and encouraged; everyone pulled together to develop and boom the town; there were no petty jealousies of one another. In fact there had already come to life [by 1904] what has rightly been called ‘the Saskatoon spirit.’¹⁷

Boosters saw themselves as community builders in mushrooming cities with unbounded hopes; an environment where personal and public growth, personal and public prosperity intermingled. There was no room for sceptics or, as they were often called, “knockers.” Indeed, so powerful was the booster psychology of the civic and business leaders that few in any of the cities rose to challenge their leadership. Throughout the period, the boosterism of the many overshadowed the caution or opposition of the few.¹⁸

This general lack of overt opposition to boosterism in prairie cities was in part the result of a restricted municipal franchise which did not allow the majority of residents to participate in civic affairs. But the lack of opposition also stemmed from the fact that the boosters effectively used the idea of community solidarity as a purification ritual, a means of discrediting opponents. Advocates and supporters of boosterism were intent on creating a feeling of community spirit on the basis of voluntarism, without any basic revision of the system of economic inequity and social injustice that existed in the cities. They did this by successfully promoting the notion that all classes and groups could be united on the basis of faith in the city, belief in its destiny, and commitment to its growth.

The community spirit promoted by the elites of prairie cities was one that was fashioned more out of will than out of reality, more out of wishful thinking than out of experience. The elites talked about understanding and common ties, about creating a store of wealth to benefit all citizens, but in fact were generally unconcerned about the vast majority of residents as long as they did not disrupt existing relationships. The myth of a shared sense of community was thus a valuable falsehood for the boosters since it enabled them to implement their programs with a minimum of opposition. The booster ethos was calculated not only to meet immediate needs and insure urban expansion, but also to justify social conformity and maintain the existing social and economic system since only a "united" community could prosper. Boosterism as practised in prairie cities even had a tinge of blackmail associated with it. So effective were the booster campaigns about opportunity for everyone, about wealth and greatness available for the grasping, that few residents were not involved. Nearly everyone was infected with the boom psychology, and once involved—whether in land speculation or business promotion—there was an added financial incentive to support the booster campaigns.¹⁹

Strong beliefs in the virtues of rapid growth, material progress, and social conformity were combined with an equally strong belief in the special role of local government. The boosters shared the view that the active encouragement of growth and business enterprise was the prime concern of a municipal corporation. Local government was purely functional; it was a tool serving personal and community prosperity. Unlike municipal corporations in older, established cities, the governments of the upstart prairie cities had little odour of sanctity; time-honoured precedents that might have got in the way of the uses to which government was put were non-existent. Prairie city boosters were not confronted with the problem of evading obsolete regulations or dislodging established oligarchies as were their counterparts in the East.²⁰ In the West, "the dignity of government [was] much diminished, its utility greatly increased."²¹ It was merely a device to be used for the benefit of the people who had managed to gain political power or influence. And in all prairie cities it was the businessmen who early gained control of government and who continued throughout the period to maintain that control.

Another element in the booster mentality was the loose degree of attachment to the gospel of Social Darwinism. It is true, of course, that boosters often sang the praises of rugged individualism and competition. But it is also true that "the reality was often at variance with the rhetoric."²² As one student of the attitudes of Canadian businessmen during this period observes:

Individualism, though clearly insufficient for business success, was deemed perfectly sufficient for success as a worker or farmer. Business was justified in striving mightily to overcome the laws of supply and demand and the forces of the marketplace; others should bend to them. Co-operation was the keynote of the new business philosophy; hard work and saving were to be others' code. The leaders of trade combines were business statesmen; the leaders of labour unions and farmers' organizations were parasitical demagogues. The price-cutter in business was a pirate, reckless and unethical; the scab worker was a free and honest man.²³

The attitude of boosters toward organized labour and the poor and disadvantaged was one of scorn, and the cities the boosters dominated spent only a small fraction of their budgets on such community services as sanitation, health departments, or welfare—far less than was spent on promoting growth. In these areas, "survival of the fittest" was the norm.

The individualism of the boosters was selective, influencing only some of their activities. It often amounted to a philosophy of individualism for the poor and co-operation for the rich.²⁴ Boosters not only used the communities' funds for their own ends but went further to become in many instances firm believers in municipal ownership. It is also noteworthy that one of the first organizations created in all prairie cities was a board of trade, designed through co-operation to facilitate the growth of the cities.²⁵

One final, general point can be made concerning the boosters' beliefs and attitudes. While the philosophy or outlook of the prairie booster was surcharged with an optimism which sometimes resulted in self-deception, it was rarely blind to the essentials of urban growth. There was a strong strain of realism in it. Boosters realized that the development of the wheat economy would result in the establishment of a large number of towns and villages linked up with a limited number of commercial cities situated at the junction points of several railway lines.²⁶ They also knew that the uniform topography of the prairies placed a large number of small centres on an almost equal footing as aspirants for the coveted prize of big city status. Only a few possessed natural advantages as townsites and these were either shared with others or were not sufficiently prominent to discourage rivals. Every booster knew, almost instinctively, that the telling distinction would be the initiative and skill of his community's leaders.

II

One characteristic that was shared by boosters in all five centres was an eagerness to attain formal city status for their communities far in advance of that title coinciding with reality. Winnipeg, unlike the other prairie cities, never did go through the chrysalis stage of either village or town. When incorporated by the provincial legislature in

November 1873, the approximately 1,600 residents of the small hamlet sought and obtained at the outset the clear and unambiguous title of city—a terminology, however divorced from reality, they felt would be more respected back East.²⁷ Regina was not quite so brash. Although it skipped the village state, it was incorporated as a town in December 1883 with the distinction of being the first organized urban centre of the territories.²⁸ The new town's population was around 900. Furthermore, it was not until 1903 that Regina sought and achieved incorporation as a city.²⁹ But this uncharacteristic tardiness in seeking city status is balanced by two significant facts. First, although legally only a town, Regina adopted the title of city in practice soon after 1883.³⁰ Second, when it did apply for city status in 1903, Regina had a population of under 3,000, hardly the numbers usually associated with a city.

Calgary followed Regina's example in immediately incorporating as a town in 1884. It had, at the time, a meagre population of 506.³¹ Nine years later, in 1893, with a population of less than 4,000, Calgary received its city charter, the first urban centre in the territories to acquire that status.³² In Edmonton, members of the Board of Trade, organized in 1889, pushed for incorporation. In February 1892, with a population of only 700, Edmonton became a town. City status came in 1904 when the population was 8,350.³³ Edmonton thus had the distinction of having the largest population of any of the five prairie centres when it formally became a city, though it can be noted that as late as 1901 its population was only 2,626. Saskatoon was the last of the five communities to formally incorporate as a city; it did not attain that goal until 1906 when its population was 3,000. Saskatoon was also the only one of the five to follow the pattern of village, town, and finally city status. It had first been organized as a village in November 1901 with a population of 113. But this lowly status did not long remain in effect since in 1903 Saskatoon became a town.³⁴

The manner in which all five urban centres sought and finally achieved city status was very much in keeping with the boom psychology of the pre-1913 era.³⁵ The arguments used in each community were strikingly similar. Local pride, respect in eastern Canada, and the distinction of achieving the coveted "city" title far in advance of rivals were common refrains.³⁶ Municipal organization was essentially a technique of boosting—"it advertized the community and gave it a dignity which its physical appearance could not impart; . . . it was an act of faith, an expression of confidence in the future."³⁷ The fact that formal municipal organization was also a means to self-government was only rarely mentioned.³⁸ But these arguments, or the lack of them, were neither the most effective nor the most significant. The most important were that town and city status provided a broader base for borrowing funds for public works and other expenditures, and

that the titles presented better opportunities for advertising and promotion.

Saskatoon's incorporation experiences are especially enlightening in this regard, although they were not very different from those of other prairie centres.³⁹ In 1902, the residents of the village of Saskatoon were aware that a group of British immigrants—the Barr Colonists—were scheduled to stop over en route to their new homes.⁴⁰ Several local businessmen immediately seized upon this anticipated event as a good reason to seek town status. They argued that to encourage immigrants to remain in the district, Saskatoon would have to carry out an extensive public works program and to do so would have to borrow large sums of money. Since villages could borrow an amount equal to only five percent of the total assessment while town status permitted borrowing double this amount, a campaign for incorporation as a town was hastily begun. To reach the 450 needed for town status, the organizers of the incorporation movement had to include in their census not only permanent residents but also guests in the hotels crowded with the spring immigration rush and everyone else in sight, but it was argued that the visitors would probably settle in Saskatoon anyway. In July 1903, Saskatoon was incorporated as a town.⁴¹ Two years later, similar arguments were used to achieve city status, which allowed borrowing to twenty percent of assessment. This time the increased power was needed to help in the effort to obtain both the provincial capital and the main line of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. The success of the campaign for incorporation as a city was never in doubt.⁴²

As important as the achievement of city status was to the boosters, it alone did not satisfy their grand visions. In the years prior to the recession of 1913, all five cities underwent vast spatial expansions, bringing huge areas of land within their municipal boundaries. Winnipeg, which started off with an area of 1,920 acres in 1874, had grown to include 14,861 acres by 1913. This was accomplished by two major annexations of territory, in 1882 and 1906, and by several smaller additions in 1875, 1902, 1905, 1907 and 1913. Significantly, the city did not again expand its boundaries until 1963 except to add very small areas of land.⁴³ In Regina's case, the expansion was completed in one fell swoop. With an area of 1,942 acres in 1883, Regina increased its size fourfold in 1911 by adding 6,458 acres. It, too, found it unnecessary to make any further major additions until the 1950s.⁴⁴

The town of Calgary began in 1884 with 1,600 acres, and through annexations in 1901, 1903, 1906, 1907, 1910, and 1911 it reached a size of almost 26,000 acres by 1912. No further additions were made until 1951.⁴⁵ Saskatoon's expansion was more modest. When incorporated as a city in 1906 it included 2,567 acres and, prior to the 1950s, made

only one major addition—in 1911 it increased its territory by 5,913 acres.⁴⁶ The record for expansion clearly belongs to Edmonton. In 1892 it was a town comprising only 2,162 acres. But additions quickly followed in 1899, 1904, 1908, 1911, 1912 and 1913. With two further annexations in 1914 and 1917, the city grew to no less than 26,290 acres. Again, no further major additions were undertaken until the 1950s.⁴⁷

The "land hunger" of the booster-oriented city councils of the five prairie cities gave them a special status among Canada's urban centres. In 1921 four prairie cities—Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, and Regina—had the lowest population density ratios of Canada's twenty largest urban areas (see Table III). Edmonton, for example, had only 2.2 persons per acre in 1921 compared to 19.2 for Montreal, 31.5 for Toronto, and 13.6 for Halifax. Regina's population of 34,432 was spread out over 8,429 acres, a density of 4.1 per acre. In contrast, Windsor, with a population of 38,591, had a land area of 2,726 acres and a population density of over 14 per acre.

TABLE III
AREA AND DENSITY OF POPULATION
OF CANADA'S TWENTY LARGEST CITIES, 1921

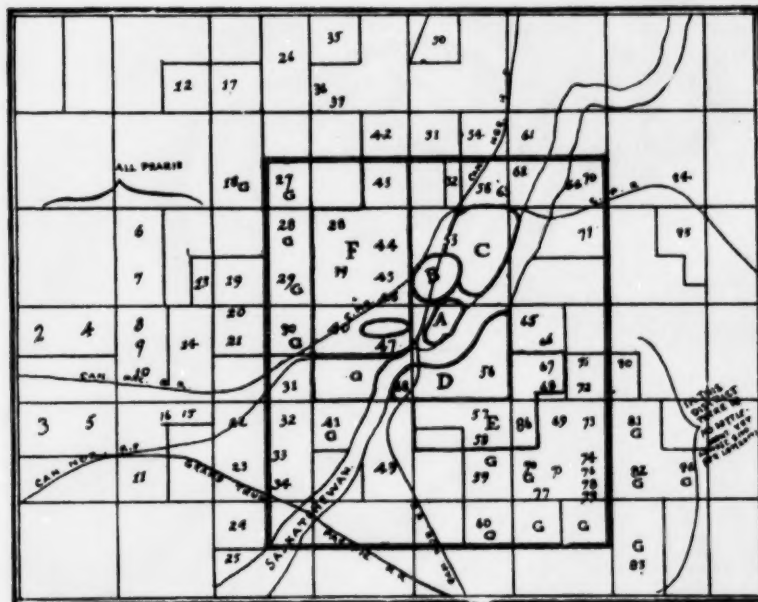
City	Rank		Population	Land Area in Sq. Miles	Population per Sq. Mile
	By Size	By Density			
Montreal	1	3	618,506	50.24	12,311
Toronto	2	1	521,893	25.89	20,158
Winnipeg	3	9	179,087	23.22	7,712
Vancouver	4	10	117,217	16.89	6,703
Hamilton	5	6	114,151	12.11	9,426
Ottawa	6	2	107,843	6.44	16,745
Quebec	7	5	95,193	8.84	10,768
Calgary	8	19	63,305	40.50	1,563
London	9	11	60,959	10.63	6,077
Edmonton	10	20	58,821	42.50	1,384
Halifax	11	8	58,372	6.72	8,686
Saint John	12	16	47,166	14.31	3,296
Victoria	13	13	38,727	7.25	5,341
Windsor	14	7	38,591	4.26	9,058
Regina	15	17	34,432	13.17	2,614
Brantford	16	12	29,440	4.93	5,972
Saskatoon	17	18	25,739	12.50	2,059
Verdun	18	4	25,001	2.22	11,262
Hull	19	15	24,117	6.25	3,859
Sherbrooke	20	14	23,515	4.85	4,848

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. I.*

The boundary extensions of prairie cities were products of the boom psychology of the period preceding 1913 and provided perhaps the best example of the inflated expectations of the boosters. Large areas were added to the cities far in advance of population pressure; not only did prairie cities have some of the lowest population densities among Canadian cities, but in every case the population was far from evenly distributed throughout the area. Indeed, vast stretches of the city's lands were completely uninhabited or unused (see Figures I and II).⁴⁸

Since population pressure can hardly account for any but a very few of the many annexations of territory, the reasons for the physical growth must be sought elsewhere. They are not hard to find. Among the arguments used by expansionists was the fact that extended boundaries gave the cities larger total assessment values, thus increasing both tax revenues and the borrowing power of the municipal corporation.⁴⁹ Large assessment figures were also useful when cities went seeking customers for city bonds and debentures.⁵⁰ Another reason for the expansions was the argument that much of the land surrounding the cities was held by foreign—i.e., non-resident—speculators and that by bringing the land within the city's taxing authority, a source of revenue that would be of benefit to local citizens could be tapped.⁵¹ The most important reason, however, was the pressure exerted on city councils by local real estate interests. In every city vast chunks of agricultural land were subdivided and offered for sale.⁵² In Saskatoon, for example, there were only twenty-eight real estate firms in 1908; by 1912 there were 267 operating firms with land available for sale in no less than 107 subdivisions. Despite the fact that over 5,900 acres had just been added to the city in 1911, there were, in 1913, forty square miles of agricultural land outside the city limits subdivided for intended urban expansion. Had the real estate bubble not burst in 1913, Saskatoon probably would have expanded its boundaries still further.⁵³ In Calgary, expansions were urged on by most of the city's two thousand real estate agents who, in 1912, operated out of 443 firms.⁵⁴ And in Winnipeg in 1913 there was land for sale in no less than twenty subdivisions outside the city limits. The *Canadian Annual Review* of 1913 summed up the situation:

Through the Western Provinces . . . everybody had been speculating in real estate, every village and town had been anticipating the days when it would be a city or important centre. Nearly everyone for a time had made money out of selling properties to others in their locality, to the visitor or investor from abroad, to the speculator in another city, to syndicates which further exploited the property or combination of properties as Subdivisions, to the American sharper who bought land for a trifle miles away from the centre of a town and flooded Eastern or English newspapers with flashy advertisements of "a choice residential centre" close to



A WESTERN CITY IN THE MAKING.

Map of City of Saskatoon and surrounding territory, drawn to scale, each block representing a section of 640 acres, or one square mile. Saskatoon has now a population of about 20,000, and the official "city" limits contain in the neighborhood of fourteen square miles, or half the area of Toronto, and three-quarters the area of Montreal. The heavy black lines in the form of a square represent the city limits as they now exist. Key to map: A—The select business section, with land at \$1,000 per front foot, the price of centrally located business property in Toronto. B—Business section, land \$1,000 per front foot. Small oval to left of A is a small business centre. Here land is selling at \$250 per front foot. C—Good residence section. D—Land here \$60 to \$100 per front foot. E—About limits of actual settlement on east side of river. F and G—Open prairie.

It will be observed that the vast majority of these sub-divisions which the easterner has been buying are not now within practicable walking distance of the business centre of Saskatoon, and, as our Special Commissioner puts it, are for the most part the product of "strong-arm come-ons."

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| Upper left hand corner—Crescent Heights. | 29—Mount Royal. | 57, 58—Buenavista. |
| 3—Leland Park. | 30—Pleasant Hill. | 59—Broadway Addition. |
| 6—Industrial Centre and Industrial Centre Addition. | 31—Andrews Addition. | 60—Pacific Addition. |
| 4—Regal Terrace. | 32—Rosedale. | 61—Richmond Park Annex. |
| 5—Cordage Park. | 33—Parkview—A. | 62—Richmond Park. |
| 8—Windsor Park. | 34—Parkview and Transcona. | 63 and 70—Parkdale. |
| 7—Westward Park. | 35—Penny Park. | 64, 65—University Annex and Bottom—lay Addition. |
| 9—National Park. | 36—Long Acres. | 67, 68—College Park. |
| 10—St. Charles Park. | 37—Saskatoon. | 69—Nelson Hill. |
| 11—University Central Park. | 38, 39—Rushin Place. | 70—Victoria Park. |
| 12—Broad Acres. | 40—Westmount. | 71—University Heights. |
| 13—Dundonald. | 41—Riverview. | 72—Alexandra Park. |
| 14—Fairhaven. | 42, 43—G.T.F. Addition. | 73—University Homes. |
| 15 and 16—Shagbushy Heights. | 44—Lakeside. | 74—Wetman Park. |
| 17—Regent Park. | 45—Mayfair. | 75—University Park. |
| 18—Glen Arbor. | 46—Crescent Hill Addition. | 76—Wetman View. |
| 19—Mount Royal Annex. | 47, 48—Ashworth Heights Addition. | 77—Sterling Park. |
| 20—Pleasant Hill Annex. | 49—Riverdale. | 78—Alvarado. |
| 21—St. Paul's Place. | 50—Idylwyld Park. | 79—Hampton Park. |
| 22—Rosedale .44 tion. | 51—Belvedere Addition. | 80—Queen's Park. |
| 23—Fairview. | 52—Silver Heights. | 81—Brevoort Park. |
| 24—Burnside. | 53—Highlands. | 82—Utopia. |
| 25—Fort Rouge. | 54—McViney Addition. | 83—Fulton Place. |
| 26—Devonshire Heights Annex. | 55—Beveridge Survey. | 84—Sydney View. |
| 27—Tuxedo Park. | 56—Highlands Addition. | 85—Guthrie Park. |
| 28—Highbury Park. | 57 and 58—Shelick Addition and North Park. | 86—Crescent Park. |
| | 59, 60—Dunsmuir. | 87, 88—McIntosh Park. |

FIGURE 1—SASKATOON IN 1912

SOURCE: Norman Harris, "What's What in Western Real Estate—Saskatoon and its '57 Varieties' of Subdivisions," *Saturday Night*, Vol. 25, No. 34 (June 1, 1912), p. 17.



FIGURE II—EDMONTON IN 1912

SOURCE: Norman Harris, "What's What in Western Real Estate—Edmonton, the City of the North," *Saturday Night*, Vol. 25, No. 40 (July 13, 1912), p. 17.

such and such a progressive town, or rising centre, or seat of future railway and industrial development. . . . The whole thing was ephemeral, a natural product of exotic progress, an outgrowth of Western enthusiasm.⁵⁵

The advantages, for owners of real estate, that came with the inclusion of their property within city boundaries were twofold. First, it was a decided benefit to be able to legitimately advertise one's property as being in a city, rather than on the outskirts, although it must be noted that this obstacle was often overcome by other means.⁵⁶ Second, inclusion within boundaries meant that urban services—waterworks, sewers, roads, streetcar lines, and so on—were likely to be extended to one's property, and this obviously led to increased prospects for both sales and profits. Thus, as with the move to city status, inclusion of land within city boundaries had the effect of raising the value and appeal of real estate holdings.

III

The fantastic spatial growth of the prairie cities, coupled with the rapid population growth that occurred in the pre-1913 period, presented a gargantuan problem for local authorities. Municipal services needed to be expanded at an ever-increasing pace. In Alberta's cities, for example, the expenditure and debenture debt increased at a startling pace in the years 1906-1913. In 1906 Alberta's cities spent only \$2 million; in 1912 they spent \$16.6 million. The total surged to a high of \$36.5 million in 1913. The city of Edmonton alone spent forty percent of the 1913 total, or one and a half times the entire provincial government expenditure in that year.⁵⁷ Calgary spent \$1 million on civic building in 1911 and another \$3 million on street railways, waterworks, sewers, schools, electric lighting, paving and parks.⁵⁸ In the five years from 1909 to 1913 Winnipeg expended \$81,000,000 on buildings alone; Calgary, \$50,000,000; Edmonton, \$32,000,000; Regina, \$20,000,000; and Saskatoon, \$14,000,000.⁵⁹

While much of this massive expenditure was made in a legitimate attempt to provide necessary services to a burgeoning population, there was also a good deal of unnecessary expansion during the period—expenditures that added unwarranted burdens to the already over-taxed facilities and resources of the prairie cities. The irony of the situation was that in providing services to new and unpopulated subdivisions far from the city centres, councils neglected to provide adequate services to already developed areas.⁶⁰ In Regina, the municipally-owned street railway system was under constant pressure by private real estate firms to build lines into areas "well past the limits of heavy settlement where little and often no housing existed."⁶¹ One result of this policy of creating streetcar suburbs was a loss of over

\$60,000 on the operation of the system in 1913, in addition to the service charges on the \$1.5 million debt of the public street railway company in 1913.⁶² Yet the obvious lack of judicious planning apparent in the operation and expansion of the street railway system was contrasted with a situation in the city's foreign ghetto of "Germantown" where sixty percent of the houses lacked such basic services as sewer and water connections.⁶³

A similar situation existed in Edmonton. In that city, the pressure exerted by private land developers in regard to the extension of city services nearly always had the desired effect. One writer, commenting on Edmonton city council's policies in regard to utility expansion, has stated:

[Private land developers] bought lands on the periphery of the city but often could not develop or sell them without first having city services extended on them. Nor could they sell for a better price if the services were not first extended to the sites. Successfully they influenced the Council to extend to these areas not only the street-car system but other utilities as well, chiefly water and sewerage, and light and power. In this way the value of their lands increased and, consequently, the harvest of profits.

Now it has to be admitted that the problem the Council faced was acute and complex. Yet, administrative authorities should not be guilty of favoritism. Moreover, the evidence of mismanagement, as revealed by the Council minutes of 1913, hints at this and suggests that their motives might have been self-interested. The evidence seems also to justify the conclusion that a well-thought out policy in regard to street railway extension was lacking. Before an extension was carried out no thought was given to the expenditure involved, the revenue to be derived that would or would not warrant the extension, the distance the property was from existing utilities, and the scattered development that would exist. . . . Thus the Council of 1913 may be criticized for permitting indiscriminate street railway extensions and by so doing increasing the burden of taxation. The waste was made manifest after the boom collapsed. The City was left with numerous pieces of vacant land, particularly on its periphery, serviced with utilities.⁶⁴

The tremendous sums of money required to pay for the essential as well as the unessential expenditures of prairie cities during these years of rapid expansion came, of course, either from municipal taxes or from the sale of city bonds and debentures.⁶⁵ While it is true that prairie cities at one time or another raised some revenue from business taxes, licence fees, poll taxes, and even income taxes, the major source of income for the municipal corporations was property taxation.⁶⁶ Furthermore, the property taxes levied by the prairie cities, particularly in the years immediately preceding World War I, were for the most part taxes on the assessed value of land; improvements were either exempted or taxed at only a percentage of their value. While eastern Canadian cities continued in nearly every case to tax land and

improvements at 100 percent of their value and to raise significant segments of their revenues from a variety of other sources, prairie cities moved rapidly in the pre-World War I era to an almost total dependence on land taxes. The reason for this situation was the influence of Henry George's single-tax philosophy throughout western Canada.

In its pure form the single tax is a system of taxation by which a community raises its entire revenue from land taxes. The justification given for the scheme is that the value of land is entirely due to the presence and expenditure of the people and the community should therefore receive the benefit through taxation. Through placing all taxes on land, Henry George hoped to nullify the negative effects of land speculation and ultimately eliminate private land ownership.⁶⁷ It is ironic then that the adoption of the single tax—or, more precisely, a modified version of it, since it was never followed in its pure form—should have been adopted in western Canadian cities at a time when speculators were making fortunes from land sales.⁶⁸ It is even more ironic that among the chief proponents of the modified single tax were the real estate speculators themselves.⁶⁹ It is clear, however, that the prairie boosters who supported the modified single tax philosophy did so for reasons that might well have caused Henry George to turn in his grave. For while all the classic arguments in support of land value taxation were bandied about, the adoption of a modified form of single tax in the five prairie cities came about for at least three specific reasons—reasons quite distinct from George's general philosophy.

First, a heavy tax on land values was a means whereby municipal corporations could raise large sums from non-resident land owners and speculators. In Edmonton, for example, the move to a single tax in 1904 came about largely as a way to shift the burdens of taxation to the Hudson's Bay Company, which, at the time, owned a tract of land approximately a mile and a half long by a mile wide in the heart of the city.⁷⁰ And even though resident speculators would also have to pay similar taxes, the local businessmen involved in speculation "do not expect to hold their land long, often not even over one tax-paying period" and they thus "do not object strongly to shifting of the [tax] burden to land."⁷¹ The second reason for the adoption of a modified version of the single tax was the belief that it stimulated development by encouraging building. An investigator of the western Canadian tax situation observed:

[Real estate men] are eager to encourage anything which promises to assist in increasing land values and nothing seems to be more effective for this purpose than the rapid construction of buildings. They are convinced that the land tax stimulates building, and, as one of them expressed it, every real estate man "is for all the single tax he can get." They look upon the plan as a bonus

to building, and they, being interested primarily in that part of land which is ripe for building, pay only part of that bonus. Part is borne by the other land owners who had already purchased land when the tax was imposed—purchased it perhaps from these very real estate men. Thus, indirectly, they pay at least part of the bonus themselves.⁷²

The third reason for the support the idea of land value taxation received was that it could be implemented in varying degrees without reducing the overall tax base. Since land values were increasing at a fantastic pace (see Table IV), and since prairie cities were continually expanding their boundaries, taxes on improvements and other forms of taxation could be reduced or removed entirely without the tax base diminishing.⁷³ Land assessment values in Winnipeg, for example, jumped from \$11.9 million in 1900 to \$53.7 million in 1906, and to \$259.4 million by 1913. In Edmonton the increases were even more dramatic. Land assessment value stood at only \$1.3 million in 1900; by 1913 it exceeded \$188 million. In Calgary, property at the corner of 7th Avenue and 2nd Street West, just on the edge of the main business area, was valued at \$150 in 1895. By 1905 the same lot was worth \$2,000; by 1912 the purchase price had jumped to \$300,000.⁷⁴ In short, the move to an almost exclusive form of land value taxation was very much a product of the western boom.

TABLE IV

LAND ASSESSMENT VALUES IN
PRAIRIE CITIES, 1895-1913 ^(a)
(in millions of dollars)

Year	Winnipeg	Regina	Saskatoon	Calgary	Edmonton
1895	11.7	—	—	1.5 ^(b)	1.1
1900	11.9	—	—	1.0 ^(c)	1.3
1902	12.6	1.0	—	1.0 ^(d)	1.7
1904	25.1	2.2	0.4	2.1	3.9
1906	53.7	6.4	2.5	7.7	17.0
1908	62.7	12.4	8.1	10.3	22.5
1910	108.6	12.1	8.6	22.4	30.1
1912	151.7	65.5	35.4	102.2	123.4
1913	259.4	82.5	56.3	133.0	188.5

Notes: a) The figures are net values; i.e., exempted property is excluded.

b) 80% of net value

c) Includes property owned by city and exemptions.

d) 90% of net value.

SOURCES: R. M. Haig, *The Exemption of Improvements From Taxation in Canada and the United States* (New York, 1915); Province of Manitoba, *Report of the Assessment and Taxation Commission* (Winnipeg, 1919); City of Saskatoon, *1975 Municipal Manual*; P. R. Creighton, "Taxation in Saskatoon: A Study in Municipal Finance," M.A. Thesis (University of Saskatchewan, 1925); Henry Howard, *The Western Cities: Their Borrowings and Their Assets* (London, England, 1914).

The actual extent to which prairie cities adopted a modified version of the single tax varies considerably, although no western centre was immune from the intoxicating arguments put forward by single tax supporters. Of the five major cities, Winnipeg was affected least, perhaps because of the relative maturity of its leading businessmen and politicians and because of its dominant position in the urban hierarchy. In 1909 buildings, which until then had been taxed at 100 percent of their assessed value, began to be taxed at only two-thirds of their value.⁷⁵ In both Regina and Saskatoon taxes on improvements were reduced by a 1908 provincial statute to 60 percent, but the move toward the single tax did not stop here. Regina further reduced the improvement tax to 45 percent. In 1912 it became 35 percent and in 1913, 25 percent.⁷⁶ Calgary reduced its improvement tax from 100 percent to 80 percent in 1909 and then followed these reductions with two further ones in 1911 and 1912. In 1911 the tax was set at 50 percent; in 1912 it was reduced to 25 percent.⁷⁷ It was in Edmonton, however, that the single tax philosophy went furthest. In 1904 the improvement tax was eliminated; a situation which lasted until 1918. Several other taxes were also abandoned; the poll and income taxes in 1910 and the business tax in 1911.⁷⁸

The effects these tax policies had upon the development of prairie cities were mixed. Even though the adoption of a modified version of the single tax occasioned numerous reports and studies, the wisdom of the policy remained a matter for debate. Supporters and detractors of land value taxation agreed on only one thing—the modified single tax did not stop land speculation. Single tax proponents argued that the tax did in fact stimulate development; its detractors labelled land value taxation a complete failure and held it responsible for the financial difficulties prairie cities faced in the decades after World War I.⁷⁹

IV

A judicious examination of the impact of the tax policies of prairie cities is, of course, impossible without considering these policies together with the other booster-inspired programs implemented in the years prior to 1914. Furthermore, until a great deal more research has been carried out, the cumulative effects of early city incorporation, massive boundary extensions, huge public works programs, deficit financing, and land value taxation (together with booster policies in such areas as railway promotion, immigration encouragement, industry attraction, and municipal ownership) cannot be detailed except in a very general way. A precise measurement of the effect of boosterism on urban development must obviously await further work, including a study of "losers" as well as "winners." But, even at this point, four observations or conclusions—however tentative—can be made.

It is clear, first of all, that in virtually every aspiring urban centre concerted efforts were made to facilitate growth. These policies took a variety of forms, including early city incorporations, massive boundary extensions, huge public works programmes, deficit financing, special tax policies, railway promotion, immigration encouragement, industry attraction, municipal ownership, and efforts to attain status as both provincial capital and home of the provincial university. While booster policies differed in degree and kind from centre to centre, no prairie community was immune to boosterism.

Second, while the promotion strategies pursued by Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton, and Saskatoon were successful in so far as these cities were the largest on the prairies by 1913, there is some evidence to suggest that other centres—including several with greater initial advantages than the eventual “winners”—lost out partly because their leaders’ initiatives and policies were not up to those of the competition. And in the absence of sufficient initiative and skill, growth could not be sustained over long periods on the strength of natural advantages alone. In general, leaders in the losing cities were more divided and complacent, and often confined their activities to broadsides in the press.⁸⁰

Third, the policies implemented by the boosters did have some impact on prairie urban development. The decisions made by urban elites were important factors in the determination of the pattern of urban development; in the absence of these efforts a more diffuse or different urban pattern would probably have emerged. Instead, in the relatively short span of four decades five urban centres had by-passed their regional competitors (see Table I) and all had gained a prominent place within the ranks of Canada’s largest cities (see Table V). Moreover, these five cities together contained 65 percent of the region’s urban population (see Tables I and II). Booster policies also affected the region’s growth rate. In gross terms, urban growth in the prairie region in the decade preceding World War I surpassed that in all other regions of the country. The urban population of Manitoba jumped from 28 percent in 1901 to 43 percent in 1911, an increase of 15 percent. In Saskatchewan the increase was 11 percent (16 percent to 27 percent), in Alberta, 12 percent (25 percent to 37 percent). During the same period urban population growth in the Maritimes was only 6 percent (22 percent to 28 percent); in Quebec, 8 percent (40 percent to 48 percent); in Ontario, 10 percent (43 percent to 53 percent); and in British Columbia, 2 percent (50 percent to 52 percent).⁸¹ Of course, the region’s relative newness together with the development of the wheat economy of the prairies had much to do with this rapid rate of urbanization. Still, in the absence of such massive efforts on the part of urban elites throughout the prairies, it is possible that many of the

TABLE V

RANK OF SELECTED CANADIAN CITIES
BY SIZE, 1901-1921

Rank	1901	1911	1921
1	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal
2	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto
3	Quebec	WINNIPEG	WINNIPEG
4	Ottawa	Vancouver	Vancouver
5	Hamilton	Ottawa	Hamilton
6	WINNIPEG	Hamilton	Ottawa
7	Halifax	Quebec	Quebec
8	Saint John	Halifax	CALGARY
9	London	London	London
10	Vancouver	CALGARY	EDMONTON
11	Victoria	Saint John	Halifax
12	Kingston	Victoria	Saint John
13	Brantford	REGINA	Victoria
14	Hull	EDMONTON	Windsor
15	Windsor	Brantford	REGINA
16	Sherbrooke	Kingston	Brantford
17	Guelph	Peterborough	SASKATOON
—	—	—	—
36	—	SASKATOON	—
—	—	—	—
73	CALGARY	—	—
—	—	—	—
77	EDMONTON	—	—
—	—	—	—
97	REGINA	—	—
—	—	—	—
110	SASKATOON	—	—

SOURCE: *Census of Canada, 1931, Volume I.*

immigrants and some of the capital investment that did come to the area might have gone elsewhere.

The final point that can be made about the impact of boosterism on the development of prairie cities in the pre-war era is, perhaps, the most important. By 1913 the five major prairie cities had a firmly-established framework for future development. This framework included a variety of elements ranging from particular patterns of physical development to special tax policies and government structures. The key element, however, was the attitude of the decision-makers. The pre-1913 experience confirmed in the minds of the elites in all five cities that a booster mentality was essential to continued growth. More than ever before, the elites subscribed to the

belief that "cities are made by the initiative and enterprise of their citizens."⁸² Not one of the tenets of the booster philosophy had been dislodged by past experience. In their attitudes towards railways, immigration and industrial encouragement, inter-city rivalries, labour, and the role of government, the commercial elites of the cities entered the post-war era intent on following past practices. It was, in many respects, a serious mistake. In the pre-war period, a marked fluidity existed when the opportunities for recruiting the acknowledged attributes of city status—population, major transportation facilities, capital investment—were open to all. In this situation, the leaders of the five major prairie cities acted effectively and were rewarded with rapid growth and big city status. In the subsequent era, from 1914 to the early 1940s, many of the structures, ideas, and routines that had in the past worked to fuel growth were no longer adequate. Indeed, in many cases they became, in themselves, obstacles to continued or renewed growth. The three decades following 1913 were taken up with repeated efforts to alter or overcome the negative effects of earlier decisions. All five cities struggled to regain the initiative they realized was so important to continued success. It was true, of course, that the problems of the inter-war era were aggravated by a long period of depression, but it was also true that the earlier framework of growth could be redefined or reordered to deal with new problems only with great difficulty. By the early 1940s, some of the problems had been overcome and the five centres looked forward to better times. Yet the ability of the cities to take advantage of post-war prosperity was limited; although some changes had been made and some problems overcome, the framework remained relatively rigid. The fact was that by the 1950s prairie cities were in most respects still tied to the structures, ideas, and routines of a bygone era, and no amount of simple manoeuvring could alter this legacy in a major way. Growth in the post-war era occurred almost in spite of the framework and the efforts of urban elites rather than because of them.⁸³

This overview of the early history of prairie urban development does not support the idea that local leaders through their actions created their cities, or were alone responsible for their patterns of growth and development. Nor does it reveal the unfolding of a pre-determined design whereby a number of prairie hamlets emerged as the major cities of a region. It shows instead the influence of boosterism on urban development. The scope, character, and direction of community policy—conditioned by a complex framework of geographic and economic influences—had profound effects on the rise of prairie cities. It does not propose that "men, not chance" made prairie cities, but rather that the element of urban leadership must be an integral part of any explanation of urban growth.

NOTES

- ¹ The best survey of urban development on the prairies is Paul Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies, 1871-1916," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. VIII, No. 15 (May 1975), pp. 77-101. Three of the five dominant cities (Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Calgary) are also discussed in J. M. S. Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West, 1870-1914," in Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 125-41.
- ² For an excellent discussion of resource base and urban growth see N. H. Lithwick and Gilles Paquet, "Urban Growth and Regional Contagion," in Lithwick and Paquet, eds., *Urban Studies: A Canadian Perspective* (Toronto, 1968), pp. 18-40.
- ³ See, for example, K. Lenz, "Large Urban Places in the Prairie Provinces—Their Development and Location," in R. L. Gentile, ed., *Canada's Changing Geography* (Toronto, 1967), pp. 199-211; L. D. McCann, "Urban Growth in Western Canada, 1881-1961," *The Albertan Geographer*, No. 5 (1969), pp. 65-74; C. M. Studness, "Economic Opportunity and the Westward Migration of Canadians During the Late Nineteenth Century," *C.J.E.P.S.*, Vol. XXX (1964), pp. 570-84; K. H. Norrie, "The Rate of Settlement of the Canadian Prairies, 1870-1911," *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. XXXV (June 1975), pp. 410-27; G. A. Nader, *Cities of Canada*, Volumes I and II (Toronto, 1975 and 1976); N. H. Lithwick, "The Process of Urbanization in Canada," in R. M. Irving, ed., *Readings in Canadian Geography* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 130-45; A. F. Burghardt, "A Hypothesis About Gateway Cities," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. LXI, No. 2 (June 1971); and T. Kuz, "Metropolitan Winnipeg: Inter-Urban Relationships," in T. Kuz, ed., *Winnipeg: 1874-1974: Progress and Prospects* (Winnipeg, 1974), pp. 7-20. For a contemporary account see E. B. Mitchell, *In Western Canada Before the War: A Study of Communities* (London, 1915).
- ⁴ This statement has been discussed in varying degrees of detail in the following: Leonard Gertler and Ronald Crowley, *Changing Canadian Cities* (Toronto, 1977), p. 152; Peter G. Goheen, "Industrialization and the Growth of Cities in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Studies*, Vol. 14 (1971), pp. 49-66; and Robert R. Dykstra, *The Cattle Towns* (New York, 1974), pp. 3-7.
- ⁵ "The effects of the policies of the commercial elite on the urban geography of the region were striking. By defeating Selkirk in its bid for the railway, by winning freight rate and other concessions from the C.P.R., and by attaining control of the grain trade, merchant wholesalers and traders made possible the emergence of Winnipeg as the primate city of the eastern prairies. Theory does not require the emergence of a single city pattern in the Red River Valley, however. In fact, it can be argued that had the railway been completed earlier and a more energetic immigration policy been followed, eastern wholesalers would have participated more vigorously in the expanded trade of the seventies and a diffuse urban pattern may well have emerged." Donald Kerr, "Wholesale Trade on the Canadian Plains in the Nineteenth Century: Winnipeg and Its Competition," in Howard Palmer, ed., *The Settlement of the West* (Calgary, 1977), pp. 151-52.
- ⁶ This generalization can be made about all five major prairie cities. See Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies," p. 101; R. C. Bellan, "Rails Across the Red—Selkirk or Winnipeg," *Manitoba Historical Society Transactions*, Series 3, No. 17 (1960-1961), pp. 69-77; and E. G. Drake, *Regina: The Queen City* (Toronto, 1955), Chapter 1.
- ⁷ This argument is not a new one. It has been examined in a limited way before. See, for example, J. M. S. Careless, "The Development of the Winnipeg Business Community, 1870-1890," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Series IV, Volume VIII (1970), pp. 239-54; and E. H. Dale, "The Role of Successive Town and City Councils in the Evolution of Edmonton, Alberta, 1892-1966," Ph.D. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1966). For an excellent discussion of boosterism in the United States see B. A. Brownwell, *The Urban Ethos in the South* (Baton Rouge, 1975).
- ⁸ See, for example, Voisey, "Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies"; Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West"; Alan F. J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal, 1975); Drake, *Regina*; A. W. Rasporich and H. C. Klassen, eds., *Frontier Calgary: Town, City, and Region, 1875-1914* (Calgary, 1975); Dale, "The Evolution of Edmonton"; Jean E. Murray, "The Provincial Capital Controversy in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. V (Autumn 1952), pp. 81-105; Jean E. Murray, "The Contest for the University of Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XII (Winter 1959), pp. 1-22; James G. MacGregor, *Alberta: A History* (Edmonton, 1972); and James D. Anderson, "The Municipal Reform Movement in Western Canada, 1880-1920," in Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, eds., *The Usable Urban Past: Politics and Planning in Modern Canadian Cities* (Toronto, 1979), pp. 73-111.
- ⁹ These impressions are derived from two in-depth studies of elites in prairie cities. See Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History*, Chapters 2 and 3; and P. Voisey, "In Search of Wealth and Status: An Economic and Social Study of Entrepreneurs in Early Calgary," in Rasporich and

- Klassen, eds., *Frontier Calgary, 1875-1914*, pp. 221-41. Other studies also tend to confirm this view, if only in a general way. See, for example, Drake, *Regina*; James G. MacGregor, *Edmonton: A History* (Edmonton, 1967); and D. C. Kerr, "Saskatoon, 1905-1913: Ideology of the Boomtime," *Saskatchewan History*, XXXII (Winter 1979), pp. 16-28. It is clear, however, that more group biographies of elites in prairie cities are still needed.
- ¹⁰ J. F. Fraser, *Canada As It Is* (London, 1911), quoted in L. H. Thomas, "British Visitors' Perceptions of the West, 1885-1914," in A. W. Rasporich and H. C. Klassen, eds., *Prairie Perspectives 2* (Toronto, 1973), p. 192.
- ¹¹ An examination of any of the promotional literature or annual reports of the various Boards of Trade produced during this period will confirm this fact.
- ¹² A. R. M. Lower, *Canadians in the Making: A Social History of Canada* (Toronto, 1958), p. 364.
- ¹³ One exception to this generalization was the issue of "bonusing." After many years of severe competition among prairie cities for industry, competition that usually resulted in the granting of cash bonuses or other similar benefits to prospective business firms in exchange for establishment in a city, the Western Canada Civic and Industrial League was organized at Regina in November 1912. One of the first resolutions passed stated:
- That the practice of granting money or land or bonuses of any nature to, or the guarantee of bonds of, corporations, firms, or individuals, in consideration of their establishing and operating factories, businesses, or industries, in Western Canada is not in the best interests of Western Canada and should be discouraged.
- Canadian Annual Review*, 1912, p. 626. Similar resolutions were passed by the Union of Manitoba Municipalities and the Union of Alberta Municipalities. *Ibid.*, pp. 627, 624. While this move ended overt competition among prairie cities, it did not end all forms of "bonusing." In ensuing years cities used such incentives as low power rates from publicly-owned utilities as a means of attracting industry. See, for example, *Canadian Annual Review*, 1925-26, p. 460.
- ¹⁴ Mitchell, *Western Canada Before the War*, p. 111. For another example of the same attitude see Thomas, "British Visitors' Perceptions of the West," p. 191.
- ¹⁵ Each city, at one time or another, delighted in stories which indicate that their "opponents" were experiencing difficulties. In January 1913, for example, the *Regina Morning Leader* carried a story with a headline that read "GIRLS CANNOT LIVE MORALLY IN CALGARY." The story that followed stated, in no uncertain terms, that no city "the size of Calgary can compare with it in regard to girls living partly vicious lives."
- ¹⁶ See L. H. Thomas, "Saskatoon, 1882-1912 (Saskatoon: University Bookstore, 1927), p. 27.
- ¹⁷ *Narratives of Saskatoon, 1882-1912* (Saskatoon: University Bookstore, 1927), p. 27.
- ¹⁸ See, for example, Voisey, "In Search of Wealth and Status"; Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History*; and J. H. Archer, "The History of Saskatoon," M.A. Thesis (University of Saskatchewan, 1948), chapter V and *passim*.
- ¹⁹ See, for example, J. P. Dickin McGinnis, "Birth to Boom to Bust: Building in Calgary, 1875-1914," in *Frontier Calgary*, pp. 6-19; John G. Niddrie, "The Edmonton Boom of 1911-1912," *Alberta Historical Review*, Vol. XIII (Spring 1965), pp. 1-6.
- ²⁰ See, for example, Archer, "History of Saskatoon"; Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History*; Drake, *Regina*, p. 156; and Dale, "The Evolution of Edmonton." One example of the situation in the east is G. Bourassa, "The Political Elite of Montreal: From Aristocracy to Democracy," in L. D. Feldman and M. D. Goldrick, eds., *Politics and Government of Urban Canada* (Toronto, 1969), pp. 124-34. See also Anderson, "The Municipal Government Reform Movement in Western Canada, 1880-1920," in Artibise and Stelter, eds., *The Usable Urban Past*.
- ²¹ W. L. Morton, "A Century of Plain and Parkland," *Alberta Historical Review*, Vol. 17 (Spring, 1969), p. 10.
- ²² R. C. Brown and R. Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto, 1974), p. 145.
- ²³ M. Bliss, *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1883-1911* (Toronto, 1974), p. 141.
- ²⁴ This attitudes have been discussed in John Weaver, "'Tomorrow's Metropolis' Revisited: A Critical Assessment of Urban Reform in Canada, 1890-1920," in Stelter and Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History*, pp. 393-418. See also the comments of Max Foran, "Urban Calgary, 1884-1895," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. V, No. 9 (April 1972), p. 67.
- ²⁵ Winnipeg's Board of Trade was established in 1879, five years after incorporation as a city. Regina was incorporated as a town in 1883 and its Board of Trade organized in 1886. Calgary became a town in 1884 and set up a Board of Trade in 1891. Saskatoon was still a village when its Board of Trade began meeting in 1903. And Edmonton had a Board of Trade as early as 1889, three years before its incorporation as a town.
- ²⁶ Thomas, "Saskatoon."

- 27 Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History*, Chapter I. Municipal government in Manitoba was administered under four types of organization: the city, the town, the village, and the rural municipality. With the exception of Winnipeg and St. Boniface, which operated under special charters, all the municipalities were subject to the Municipal Act and the Assessment Act. From the date of incorporation until 1886 the government of Winnipeg was carried on under the powers of a special charter of incorporation granted by the provincial legislature. In 1886 this special charter was repealed and from that date until 1902 the city's affairs were administered under the provisions of the municipal and assessment acts. In 1902, the city again received a special charter, which arrangement has lasted until the present day.
- 28 A. N. Reid, "Informal Town Government in Regina, 1882-3," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. VI (Autumn 1953), pp. 81-88. For general discussions of urban municipal development in the territories and later Saskatchewan and Alberta see A. N. Reid, "Urban Municipalities in the North-West Territories: Their Development and Machinery of Government," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. IX (Spring 1956), pp. 41-62; G. F. Dawson, *The Municipal System of Saskatchewan* (Regina, 1952); E. Hanson, *Local Government in Alberta* (Toronto, 1956); and K. G. Crawford, *Canadian Municipal Government* (Toronto, 1954), pp. 43-46. In the territorial phase, municipal affairs came under the Municipal Ordinance of 1883. After 1905, Saskatchewan passed the City Act, the Town Act, and the Village Act in 1908. There were no special charters for urban municipalities in the province. In Alberta, towns, villages, local improvement districts and rural municipalities operated under general provincial laws after 1905. Cities, including Calgary and Edmonton, had special charters.
- 29 Drake, *Regina*, pp. 24, 116.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 102.
- 31 L. H. Bussard, "Early History of Calgary," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1935), pp. 64-88; and Foran, "Urban Calgary, 1884-1895."
- 32 Bussard, "Early History of Calgary," p. 146.
- 33 MacGregor, *Edmonton*, pp. 107, 132.
- 34 M. A. East, *The Saskatoon Story, 1882-1952* (Saskatoon, 1952), pp. 43, 50.
- 35 The five cities discussed above had many rivals. By 1913 Manitoba had four cities: Winnipeg, St. Boniface, Brandon and Portage la Prairie. Saskatchewan had seven: Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Weyburn, Prince Albert and Swift Current. Alberta had six: Calgary, Edmonton, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Lethbridge and Wetaskiwin. Strathcona received a city charter in 1907 but amalgamated with Edmonton in 1912.
- 36 See, for example, Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History*, pp. 15-19; and *Narratives of Saskatoon*, pp. 88-89.
- 37 Thomas, "Saskatoon."
- 38 Archer, "History of Saskatoon," p. 79.
- 39 See, for example, Drake, *Regina*, p. 116; and E. Hanson, "A Financial History of Alberta," Ph.D. Thesis (Clark University, 1952), pp. 1-158.
- 40 The best account of the Barr Colony is E. H. Oliver, "The Coming of the Barr Colonists," Canadian Historical Association, *Annual Report*, 1926, pp. 65-87.
- 41 *Narratives of Saskatoon*, pp. 88-89; East, *Saskatoon Story*, p. 43; Archer, "History of Saskatoon," pp. 79-81; and W. P. Delainey and W. A. S. Sarjeant, *Saskatoon: The Growth of a City, 1882-1960* (Saskatoon, 1974), pp. 9-10.
- 42 The members of Saskatoon's Board of Trade led the campaign for city status. See *Narratives of Saskatoon*, pp. 70-71; J. E. Murray, "The Provincial Capital Controversy in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. 5 (Autumn 1952), pp. 81-105; East, *Saskatoon Story*, p. 50; and Archer, "History of Saskatoon," pp. 95-99.
- 43 See Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History*, Chapter 8; H. A. Hossé, "The Areal Growth and Functional Development of Winnipeg from 1870 to 1913," M.A. Thesis (University of Manitoba, 1956); and "Map of the City of Winnipeg Showing Original Corporate Limits and Various Extensions Thereto" (Winnipeg, 1930; revised, 1948, 1949, and 1963).
- 44 See "City Growth Maps" in City of Regina, *Housing Survey Report* (Regina, 1957), p. 10.
- 45 See "Map of Boundaries of the City of Calgary and Metropolitan Calgary as of January 1, 1975 and Annexations to the City of Calgary, 1893-1975" (Calgary: City Planning Department, 1975). In 1923, 550 acres were removed from the city of Calgary.
- 46 See "Map of City of Saskatoon, Expansion of City Limits" (Saskatoon: City Planning Department, 1975).
- 47 See "Map of City of Edmonton, History of Annexations" (Edmonton: City Planning Department, 1974).
- 48 See, for example, maps of spatial development in D. Ravis, *Advanced Land Acquisition by Local Government: The Saskatoon Experience* (Ottawa, 1973); Dale, "The Evolution of Edmonton"; and *The Metropolitan Development Plan* (Winnipeg: The Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, 1968). In 1914, Calgary had 26,763 vacant lots served with watermains and sewers. See W. Van Nus, "The Fate of City Beautiful Thought in Canada, 1893-1930," in Stelter and Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History*, pp. 162-85.

- ⁴⁹ In Regina and Saskatoon, the borrowing power of the cities was limited by provincial statute (The City Act of 1908) to twenty percent of the total assessment. The other three cities were not thus limited in their powers by provincial statute, but their city charters did contain restrictions based on percentages of total assessment. See R. M. Haig, *The Exemption of Improvements From Taxation in Canada and the United States: A Report Prepared for the Committee on Taxation of the City of New York* (New York, 1915), p. 112 and *passim*. The boundary extension undertaken by Calgary in 1910 lowered the tax burden to the average taxpayer by about ten percent. See M. L. Foran, "Land Speculation and Urban Development in Calgary, 1875-1914," *Frontier Calgary*, p. 217.
- ⁵⁰ See, for example, comments in the *Regina Morning Leader*, 23 January 1913.
- ⁵¹ Of course not all the land surrounding the cities was held by non-residents, and in some cases large land owners protested the inclusion of their land within city boundaries because of the increased taxation. See, for example, Foran, "Land Speculation and Urban Development in Calgary," p. 217.
- ⁵² For an excellent description of this situation see "Sub-Division Conditions and Land Speculation in Canada," *Canadian Annual Review*, 1913, pp. 35-42.
- ⁵³ Ravis, *Advanced Land Acquisition*, p. 13; Delaney and Sarjeant, *Saskatoon*, pp. 22-34; and R. Rees, "The 'Magic City on the Banks of the Saskatchewan': The Saskatoon Real Estate Boom, 1910-1913," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXVII (Spring 1974), pp. 51-59.
- ⁵⁴ Foran, "Land Speculation and Urban Development in Calgary," p. 213. A similar situation existed in the other cities. See, for example, W. C. Mahon, *Real Estate Highlights, 1912-1972* (Regina, 1972); and MacGregor, *Edmonton*, pp. 163-208.
- ⁵⁵ *Canadian Annual Review*, 1913, p. 39.
- ⁵⁶ See, for example, Kerr "Ideology of the Boomtime," and *Canadian Annual Review*, 1913, p. 38.
- ⁵⁷ Hanson, "Financial History of Alberta," pp. 156-57. See also Niddrie, "Edmonton Boom," pp. 1-6.
- ⁵⁸ McGinnis, "Building in Calgary, 1875-1914," p. 17.
- ⁵⁹ *Canadian Annual Review*, 1913, p. 38.
- ⁶⁰ See, for example, Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History*; and Delaney and Sarjeant, *Saskatoon*.
- ⁶¹ C. K. Hatcher, *Saskatchewan's Pioneer Streetcars. The Story of the Regina Municipal Railway* (Montreal, 1971), p. 15.
- ⁶² Haig, *The Exemption of Improvements*, p. 41.
- ⁶³ Drake, *Regina*, pp. 155-56.
- ⁶⁴ Dale, "The Evolution of Edmonton," pp. 99-100, 102.
- ⁶⁵ In 1912 alone, according to an estimate of the *Montreal Financial Times*, there were 15 floatations of bonds in London, England by western Canadian cities totalling \$27,855,000. *Canadian Annual Review*, 1913, p. 33.
- ⁶⁶ Some revenue was also raised from municipally-owned utilities but this was never a major contributor to municipal revenue. Indeed, in many cases, utilities actually lost money. For a good general discussion of taxation in Canada, including material on municipal taxation, see J. Harvey Perry, *Taxes, Tariffs & Subsidies: A History of Canadian Fiscal Development*, 2 Volumes (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955).
- ⁶⁷ Henry George, *Progress and Poverty* (London, 1911). See also M. T. Owens, *Land Value Taxation in Canadian Local Government* (Westmount, 1953).
- ⁶⁸ Rees, "The Magic City on the Banks of the Saskatchewan," p. 55.
- ⁶⁹ Haig, *The Exemption of Improvements*, *passim*.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 91. See also Perry, *Taxes, Subsidies & Tariffs*, p. 131.
- ⁷¹ Perry, *Taxes, Subsidies & Tariffs*, p. 275. See also S. Vineberg, "Provincial and Local Taxation in Canada," *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law* (Columbia University), Vol. LII, No. 1 (1912), p. 88.
- ⁷² Vineberg, "Provincial and Local Taxation," pp. 275-76. See also Owens, *Land Value Taxation*; P. R. Creighton, "Taxation in Saskatoon: A Study in Municipal Finance," M.A. Thesis (University of Saskatchewan, 1925), pp. 31-34; and City of Edmonton, *Special Report on Assessment and Taxation* (Edmonton, 1921), pp. 1-24.
- ⁷³ Haig, *The Exemption of Improvements*, pp. 266-67. It must be noted that the rapid increases in assessments were not based on realistic increases in land values. This is not only evident in declining assessments in the post-1913 period, but in comparisons made with other cities. Commenting on the situation in 1914, one observer made the following statement: "As evidence of the inflation of land values so as to obtain sufficient revenue on a low tax rate, Edmonton is a most conspicuous example. In 1914, with a population of 72,500 the assessed land value of that city was \$209,000,000. Montreal's total assessed land value in the same year was \$537,000,000. Had Montreal's land value been assessed at the same ratio to population as Edmonton's, the assessed value would have been \$1,874,000,000, or \$1,023,000,000 more than the total assessed value of Montreal's land and buildings. In other words, the assessed land value per capita was, in 1914, Montreal \$825, and Edmonton, \$2,880, or over three to

one." J. Hamilton Ferns, "Single Tax or Taxing of Land Values in Practice," *Canadian Municipal Journal*, Vol. XVI, No. 4 (April 1920), p. 119. See also A. B. Clark, "Recent Tax Developments in Western Canada," *Proceedings of the 13th Annual Conference of the National Tax Association* (New York, 1920), pp. 48-69.

⁷⁴ R. P. Bains, *Calgary: An Urban Study* (Toronto, 1973), p. 22.

⁷⁵ H. Carl Goldenberg, et. al., *Report of the Royal Commission on the Municipal Finances and Administration of the City of Winnipeg* (Winnipeg, 1939), p. 325.

⁷⁶ Haig, *The Exemption of Improvements*, pp. 40-69; Owens, *Land Value Taxation*, *passim*; and Creighton, "Taxation in Saskatoon," *passim*.

⁷⁷ Haig, *The Exemption of Improvements*, pp. 108-28; Owens, *Land Value Taxation*, *passim*; and Vineberg, "Provincial and Local Taxation in Canada," p. 83. Calgary also abandoned the income tax in 1911. See Perry, *Taxes, Subsidies & Tariffs*, pp. 134-35.

⁷⁸ City of Edmonton, *Report on Assessment and Taxation*.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Ferns, "Single Tax"; J. Loutet, "Taxing of Land Values in Theory and Practice," *Canadian Municipal Journal*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (May 1920), pp. 144-45; Haig, *The Exemption of Improvements*; Owen, *Land Value Taxation*; City of Edmonton, *Report on Assessment and Taxation*; and Rees, "The Magic City on the Banks of the Saskatchewan," p. 55.

⁸⁰ See, for example, K. A. Foster, "Moose Jaw: The First Decade, 1882-1892," M.A. Thesis (University of Regina, 1978).

⁸¹ The percentages cited represent population contained within incorporated urban centres and their proportion of the total population. *Census of Canada, 1931*, Volume I.

⁸² *Regina Leader*, 16 January 1930.

⁸³ For a discussion of prairie urban growth in the post 1913 era, see Alan F. J. Artibise, "Continuity and Change: Elites and Prairie Urban Development, 1914-1950," in Artibise and Stelter, *The Usable Urban Past*, pp. 130-54.

9. SASKATOON, 1883-1920: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

LEWIS H. THOMAS

The history of Saskatoon falls into several rather well-defined periods. The first begins with the earliest settlement in this area in 1883, and may be regarded as ending with the incorporation of the village of Saskatoon in 1901. This period can be labelled the "rural years," during which Saskatoon was a typical prairie hamlet, a frontier agricultural community providing a few rudimentary services to the surrounding farm region. By the turn of the century it had emerged as a small trade center. The second period stretches from 1901 to 1913, during which Saskatoon became predominant in the commercial life of northern Saskatchewan, and the center of higher education in the province. These are the years of urban foundations and frenzied real estate speculation, during which municipal development, social institutions, and much physical growth are apparent. The period ends with the collapse of the real estate boom in 1913. It was succeeded by seven years of stagnation. And the years since 1920 seem to form a distinct period. The growth was slower, and was accompanied by a realization of the existence of limitations on urban development in western Canada, although it is also possible to detect in Saskatoon a persistent desire, partially fulfilled, to increase in stature as a commercial and even as an industrial center. During this last era the free and easy social life of a frontier town was replaced by the more conservative and more complex social relations of an older and more cosmopolitan population. Physically the city became less angular and bare, and, clothed with verdure, it commenced to blend into the panorama of river and sky and prairie. Each of these periods has its own characteristics; each has its own tempo of life.

* * *

By 1883 the process which may be called "the institutionalizing of the prairies" was well advanced, particularly in the sphere of government. The Dominion Government was the active agent in this process. Treaties with the Indians had been concluded in an attempt to ensure peaceful relations with the white immigrants. Saskatoon was situated in the area which had been surrendered by the Plains and Wood Crees by Treaty No. 6, negotiated at Forts Carlton and Pitt in 1876. Thus the first settlers here were not affected by the problem of

Indian title, which was such a common source of frontier conflict in the United States. The nearest Indians were a small band of Sioux, headed by Chief White Cap, who had been placed on a reservation up the river at Moose Woods, near the present Dundurn. They were the first successful farmers in the region. The nearest Métis were about forty miles down the South Saskatchewan river at Batoche; their relations with the Dominion Government were gradually deteriorating at the time of the founding of Saskatoon, but the Rebellion did not come until two years later.

Another step which had been taken by the Ottawa authorities was the provision of institutions of government for the Northwest. A territorial government had been established, consisting of a Lieutenant-Governor and Council, invested with certain powers selected from those possessed by the provinces. While the functions performed by this government gradually increased in importance, the early pioneers were forced to look to Ottawa for action on most of the matters affecting their means of livelihood and prosperity. The administration of justice in the Territories was firmly established. Judicial districts had been erected, presided over by stipendiary magistrates with plenary authority. There were also justices of the peace, and the North West Mounted Police.

The third sphere of action by the Dominion Government was the promotion of the settlement, and the development of the natural resources of the Territories. In 1883 much of the prairie was still the "Great Lone Land," which Captain Butler had described at the beginning of the previous decade.¹ No great tide of immigration had yet appeared, and the government's settlement policy was still in a state of evolution. The twenty-three year depression, beginning in 1873, was only briefly mitigated by a trade revival lasting from 1879-83. This, along with periodic drought, early frosts, and grasshopper infestations, affected migration to the Territories. There was an increase in immigration during and after the construction of the CPR, but it was short-lived.

There were less than 25,000 whites in the prairie portion of the Territories in 1885, and 42,000 in 1891. The site of the future city of Saskatoon was far from the main centers of population. It was located between the older settlements along the North Saskatchewan—Prince Albert, Fort Carlton, Battleford—and the newer settlements which were springing up along the line of the CPR in the south. The nearest point on the railway was Moose Jaw, 150 miles away. The year in which Saskatoon was founded saw the shift of the Territorial capital from Battleford to Regina, closer to the new concentrations of population. Moreover, Saskatoon was not on a main line of

communication between Manitoba and the North Saskatchewan valley. The site of the city did not possess marked advantages as a fording place on the river. The great trail from Winnipeg to Edmonton over which the mails passed, crossed the south branch at Batoche, or at Gabriel's Crossing, about forty miles north. The government telegraph line to Edmonton also crossed the river about nine miles north of Saskatoon, at Clark's Crossing. While steamboats had plied the North Saskatchewan since the seventies, no regular service had been established on the south branch. Since the site of the city was not on existing lines of communication or located in a strategic relation to the main advance of the frontier of settlement, the origin of Saskatoon must be sought elsewhere. It is to be found in the evolving land policy of the Dominion Government and in the aspirations of a group of Ontario reformers.

For more than a decade the Dominion Government had been trying various expedients to bring immigrants into Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Although the free homestead was a permanent element in the land policy, other schemes for settlement were incorporated with it from time to time, notably the land grants to the CPR. During the 1870s lands had also been granted to promoters of colonization, either individuals or societies. This policy was more fully elaborated in the Dominion Lands regulations adopted in 1881, which contained provisions designed to facilitate grants of land to colonization companies.² "The colonization companies," said Prime Minister John A. Macdonald in defending the regulations, "will occupy the place for the present of the numerous railway companies in the United States, which have been proved there to be the best immigration agents."³ He also saw the revenues from the sale of land to the companies as a source of funds which would assist in meeting his government's financial assistance to the CPR. The regulations were strongly attacked by the Liberal opposition, on the ground that they placed millions of acres in the hands of speculators at a time when a speculative mania for Northwest lands existed in Ontario.

The regulations enabled colonization companies to secure tracts of "Class D Lands," i.e., lands north of the CPR railway belt and outside of the belt of any projected railway. The colonization company was to purchase the odd-numbered sections in its tract at \$2.00 per acre; the even-numbered sections were to remain as free homestead sections, and the company was made the agent for their settlement. Within five years the company was to place two settlers on every homestead section within its tract, whereupon it would receive a rebate of half the payment which had been made, in which event it would have paid only \$1 per acre. This rebate was deemed to be a sufficient

inducement to the company to fulfill its agreement to introduce settlers. The location beyond the railway line placed a serious initial handicap on the colonization project. Nevertheless there were speculators who were willing to accept these conditions, and nearly thirty agreements were entered into between the government and companies or individuals.⁴ The history of Saskatoon begins with the establishment of one of these colonization companies.

Saskatoon is unique among the larger cities of the Canadian plains in that it owes its origin to enthusiasm for moral reform. The founders of the community, and many of the early homesteaders, were supporters of one of the reform movements which swept over the United States and Canada during the nineteenth century: this was the temperance movement, the battle for sobriety and for the destruction of the political power of the liquor interests. During the summer of 1881 a group of Ontario temperance reformers, among whom clergy and members of the Methodist Church were prominent, conceived the idea of taking advantage of the colonization company device to establish a settlement in the Territories where "alcoholic beverages shall not be manufactured or sold."⁵ The promoters' plans were ambitious: they intended to colonize a tract of two million acres. Their proposal was favorably received by Sir David Macpherson, the acting Minister of the Interior.

On March 14, 1882, The Temperance Colonization Society Ltd. was incorporated with a capital stock of \$2,000,000, made up of \$100 shares. The incorporators included five clergymen (four of them doctors of divinity), the editor of the *Canadian Farmer*, the Grand Scribe of the Sons of Temperance, a few farmers, and a number of substantial businessmen. The following were among the purposes of the Society set forth in the charter:

- (a) Acquiring a tract or tracts of land in the North-West Territories of Canada with a view of colonizing and settling the same.
- (b) With power to contract with the purchasers and settlers of the lands that intoxicating liquors or alcoholic beverages shall not be manufactured or sold in the settlement. . . .
- (f) To aid by way of bonus or otherwise in the construction and maintenance of a line or lines of steamboats or barges from and through the lands of the Company to some point or place on or near and in connection with an existing or established line of railway. . . .⁶

Shares in the company were purchased by both temperance supporters and Toronto land speculators.

The government had decided to grant the two million acres for which the promoters had applied in successive blocks of townships, each block to be delivered only after the preceding block had been purchased and settled.⁷ The first block was allotted to the Society in

April 1882, and consisted of twenty-one townships which straddled the South Saskatchewan, a jagged rectangle forty-two miles long and eighteen miles wide. The item in the charter referring to transportation, as well as the location of the first townships, indicates that the center of the Society's domain was to be on the South Saskatchewan River.

Having been granted the first block of land, the next step was to select the site for a town which would be the administrative center of the Society in the Northwest, and the distributing center for the colony. The Society entrusted this task to John N. Lake, one of the Board directors. Lake, a former Methodist minister, was at this time engaged in real estate business in Toronto. In the early summer of 1882 a party of thirteen persons, including a surveyor and an experienced farmer, headed for the South Saskatchewan to examine the land and select the townsite. Two of the party travelled by boat from Winnipeg to Prince Albert, but the rest, under Lake's leadership, went by rail to Flat Creek, which was at the end of the steel at that time. Here they took to the trail which led to the South Saskatchewan, and after three weeks of travel reached the river at Clark's Crossing, near the northern boundary of the Society's block of townships. Lake and another member of the party proceeded south to the Sioux reserve, where they sought advice from Chief White Cap on the location of the best farm land and river crossing.

Then the search for a townsite began. While camping along the east bank of the river between Clark's Crossing and the Sioux reserve, Lake noted: "[We] camped on the hill over the river, thinking that it was a fine spot for a town."⁸ This campsite was probably in the vicinity of the present Nutana Collegiate, for at the bend of the river on the south and east side the bank gradually rises to a hill or plateau. Here one obtains a commanding view of a considerable stretch of the river and the country on the opposite bank. But this site possessed another important characteristic. Lake was seeking a favorable location for a railway bridge. The banks of the river and its approaches at Idylwyld and on the opposite side are comparatively low and of nearly equal height; these conditions simplify the construction of a railway bridge, and are not again encountered for some distance along the river. After careful consideration, the members of the expedition approved the site around August 18th. Lake's recollections, which may be imprecise, describe the christening of the city: "We thought of 'Minnetonka' for a name at first, but we found some 'Saskatoon' berries and that settled the name." There is evidence, however, that the Indians already called the place Saskatoon.⁹ Having spied out the country and selected the site and name of the future city, the expedition returned to Ontario to report on the promised land.

During the following summer (1883), the townsite was surveyed

and sub-divided in accordance with a plan prepared by Lake.¹⁰ The boundaries of the town formed a rough triangle: one side followed the east bank of the river, and the other two sides were Clarence Avenue and First Street. One hundred and thirty-seven blocks were surveyed and divided into lots at this time. The street layout was for the most part the rectangular gridiron pattern, although three followed the curve of the river. This was the origin of the major part of the street layout on what is now the Nutana side of the city. The river bank, Idylwyld, and two blocks fronting the river between Victoria and Broadway Avenues, were all reserved for use as parks. The names given to streets at that time have remained, with a few subsequent changes. The streets were numbered, the exceptions being Colony, Temperance and Main. The names given to the avenues are echoes of the Victorian era, and symbols of Ontario's loyalist tradition: Albert, Lansdowne, Dufferin, Victoria, Lorne and Macpherson (in honor of Sir David Macpherson, the cabinet minister who had approved the Society's project). Altogether the selection of the site and the town plan are a tribute to Lake's good judgment. Good drainage, an abundant supply of water, a favorable topography for bridging the South Saskatchewan, and a magnificent view—these were the assets with which Saskatoon began its history.

Meanwhile the Temperance Colonization Society was spreading the news of its domain in eastern Canada and abroad, and preparing for the expected influx of settlers. Publicity was carried on through the temperance organizations. There was a brisk sale of the Society's shares, amounting to about 3,000. The first settlers arrived at Saskatoon in 1883, but the mighty host which had been anticipated never appeared; although Lake predicted 250 the first year, only fifty-seven claims were registered. At the same time, criticism of colonization companies continued. At its 1883 session, the Council of the North-West Territories adopted a memorial to the Dominion Government declaring that "the system of granting immense tracts of the choicest lands in the Territories to Colonization Companies is inimical to the best interests of the Country...; the odd numbered sections are locked up for speculative purposes, which would otherwise be open for settlement or held for sale by the Government on reasonable terms."¹¹

Lake's activities in 1882 on behalf of the colony were the only successful contributions which the Society (Company) made to the founding of Saskatoon. The settlement project was mismanaged almost from the start, owing to the incompetence of the manager in Toronto, J. A. Livingston.¹² Facilities for the reception and assistance of the settlers at Saskatoon were inadequate, and a number left to take up land near the CPR. Probably eastern press reports of early frosts

and drought in Manitoba and the Territories, and the collapse of the real estate boom in 1883, discouraged migration in the early years. An annual report of the Society stated that in 1884 there were only 180 people in Saskatoon.

In 1884 a dispute arose between the government and the Society regarding the latter's attempt to enforce their temperance policy on applicants for homestead lands within their tract.¹³ It appears that Macpherson had given the organizers in the Company in 1881 the impression that they would receive a solid block of land where alcoholic liquor would be banned, and they had accordingly engaged in a widespread publicity campaign to this effect. This led to charges of fraud against the organizers, when it became known that the government would not permit the Company to enforce temperance principles on homesteaders. A series of law suits followed.

By 1886 the temperance enthusiasts had disposed of their shares, and the Company was reorganized as a pure land company, taking advantage of the government's decision to abandon the company colonization policy and terminate its arrangements with all companies.¹⁴ The Temperance Colonization Co. secured a generous grant of land in Saskatoon and district (100,000 acres), although it was only a small fraction of the two million acres which had been tentatively reserved in 1882. Apparently the Company gradually disposed of most of this property after the turn of the century, when new forces were bringing settlers to the area.

The Temperance Colonization Society, therefore, played an active role in the affairs of Saskatoon only for the first two or three years of its existence. Thenceforth progress depended on the general development of the Northwest and the efforts of the pioneer villagers and farmers. The soil in the township in which Saskatoon is situated, and in adjacent townships, is of medium quality and can be successfully cultivated only if the best dry farming techniques are utilized. Settlers from Ontario were not familiar with these techniques, and their situation was rendered more difficult by the early frosts and droughts during the rest of the 1880s. Like a large part of the Northwest, the Saskatoon district was forced to await the coming of the railway and more favorable climatic conditions before further progress could be made.

The population of Saskatoon and its environs numbered about 200 by the end of 1884. These had all come by railway as far as Moose Jaw, where they took the trail which led to Saskatoon. This was the route followed by all the early migrants, until the coming of the railway in 1890. Many are the stories of the wagon trips over this trail—the loneliness, the dangers of winter travel, the problem of obtaining forage and water for the horses or stock. When stock were brought, the

journey generally took about eight days, but without stock it could be made in four days. In 1884 the Inspector of Colonization Companies reported that Saskatoon possessed a school house, hotel, a few stores, and a good ferry.¹⁵ There were a number of residences, probably very simple frame structures. The ferry would serve the homesteaders who had settled across the river, as well as travellers making their way from Regina to Battleford. The majority of the settlers lived on homesteads in the township in which Saskatoon was located, and in five adjacent townships. Widely varying reports on the number of buildings in Saskatoon (ranging from 16 to over 100) are contained in comments by some members of the 7th Battalion of Canadian Fusiliers who came down the river on flatboats from the Elbow in 1885.¹⁶

During the two years of its active life as a colonizing agent, the Temperance Society made some attempt to assist the settlers and develop the town. Food supplies were brought to Saskatoon and sold on credit. Small buildings were erected in Moose Jaw to house the incoming settlers and their effects. In 1883 building supplies were sent from Winnipeg to Medicine Hat, and floated down the river to Saskatoon. Another batch of lumber was transported in the same manner the following year. These were the materials for the first buildings in Saskatoon. The lumber was sold at cost to the settlers, but some spent their first years on the homesteads in sod, or more often log houses. A saw mill was erected in Idylwyld, but the scarcity of suitable timber hampered its operations. The Society was confident that the South Saskatchewan could be used as a transportation route to connect with the CPR at Medicine Hat. This was the era of steamboating and steamboat projects on both branches of the river. In 1884 the Society purchased a small steamer called *The May Queen*, which made the voyage between Medicine Hat and Saskatoon in two weeks. Captain E. S. Andrews, who was in charge, found that the boat drew four feet of water, which was about the average depth of the river. "We succeeded in reaching Saskatoon chiefly because we had the stream behind us," declared the captain.¹⁷ This vessel proved to be unsuited to the river, and the Society made no further experiment with navigation.

Throughout the 1880s the settlers at Saskatoon were forced to rely on horse and wagon transportation. Although boats of shallower draft than *The May Queen* appeared on the river from time to time, no regular service was established. In December 1884, a petition signed by seventy-five men was sent from the settlement, setting forth the difficulties which faced them in marketing their crops, and requesting that railway building be encouraged by more generous provisions in land grant agreements.¹⁸ This was a common demand of the frontier, which having been granted, was often succeeded a few years later by

complaints about the management of railway lands. During 1884 and until the advent of the railway, a regular postal service was established between Saskatoon and Batoche, a stopping point for the stage coaches on the Qu'Appelle-Prince Albert mail route. Mail was also carried by private persons over the trails to Moose Jaw and Regina. However, Saskatoon did not have to rely solely on the mails for communication with the outside world. In 1885 the inhabitants provided the poles for the extension to the settlement of the government telegraph line which ran through Clark's Crossing.¹⁹

The Saskatchewan Rebellion of 1885 alarmed the people of Saskatoon, but it had no lasting impact on the village. There was some fear of marauding Indians from northern reserves, and of the Métis from Batoche, and patrols were established and ammunition secured from Moose Jaw. A volunteer brigade was established, and the Canadian forces established a field hospital in one of the houses in the hamlet. There were almost no crops planted that spring.

The economy of the community during the 1880s was of a very modest character. According to *McPhillips' Directory* for 1888, Saskatoon had at that time three general merchants, a tinsmith, a doctor, a notary, a carpenter, a mason, a dress maker and a music teacher.²⁰ In the surrounding district some degree of mixed farming seems to have prevailed before the coming of the railway. A few, despite the drought, raised a little grain, and the accounts of the agricultural exhibitions indicate that livestock and a variety of vegetables were produced.²¹ But the drought and lack of transportation were serious handicaps, and many of the inhabitants turned to freighting, or work in Prince Albert and other settlements to secure an income. The Rebellion was important in this regard, for it brought a short period of "wartime prosperity" at a time when settlers were discouraged by the failure of the plans of the Temperance Colonization Society. The settlement was never entirely self-sufficient, even in the matter of food; flour, for example, was usually imported.²² Towards the end of the decade a number of the settlers began to specialize in livestock, and throughout the nineties a number of large ranches were in operation. The railway (1890) gave a fillip to this industry, and Saskatoon became the shipping point for a large ranching district on both sides of the river and as far west as Battleford.

Perhaps one of the most interesting features of the first period of the history of Saskatoon is the Temperance Colony Pioneers' Society, organized in March 1884.²³ In its constitution and activities the response of the Ontario immigrant to frontier conditions on the prairies can be observed. The objects of the Pioneers' Society are listed in the constitution: "the discussion of matters pertaining to the welfare of the settlers, mutual counsel, the dissemination of useful knowledge,

and social intercourse." The Secretary reported in 1885 that the members consisted of "the great majority of the settlers of the Temperance Colony." This institution possessed some of the characteristics of a New England town meeting and the Puritan tradition perpetuated in Methodism was not lacking; a by-law of the Society provided that any member guilty of improper language or slander "or who shall be found guilty of fraud or other dishonorable conduct, or immorality or of any infraction of the laws of the land, shall after due trial according to the constitution, be fined or suspended as the Society may determine."

It was quite in keeping with the character of the immigrants that one of the first activities of the Society was the promotion of education; in 1884 subscriptions were secured to support a voluntary school, which met in one of the buildings erected by the Temperance Colonization Society. A proposal to organize a co-operative association with a capital of \$3,000 was discussed and approved, but the project did not get beyond the planning stage. Perhaps one of the English settlers, familiar with Rochdale principles, was responsible for this project. The Pioneers' Society became the agency for communicating the views and requests of the settlers to the Temperance Society and to the Territorial Government. The most important instance of its negotiations with that Government involved the establishment of a herd district in the Saskatoon area.²⁴ The Society also entered the field of "adult education," for papers on topics of interest to the pioneers were prepared for some of the meetings. Among the subjects discussed were "The Application of Theory to Practical Farming," "The Most Suitable Farm House for the North-West," "The Hudson Bay Route and Its Advantages to Saskatoon."

It has already been noted that the process of institutionalizing the prairies was well under way at the time of the first settlement at Saskatoon. In particular, the inhabitants, though isolated from the main frontier of settlement, were not beyond the reach of government. It has already been noted how Dominion Indians and land policies affected the early history of the city. The existence of the Territorial Government was also an important influence. For example, the pioneers did not have to resort to extra-legal methods to enforce law and order, for the Lieutenant-Governor had appointed one of them a justice of the peace in 1883.²⁵ The herd district established by the Territorial Government dealt with the problem of stray animals damaging cultivated lands. The voluntary school organized by the Society in 1884 was displaced in the following year by a regular school district, established and financially assisted by the Territorial Government.²⁶ In 1888 the Lieutenant-Governor authorized the trustees to borrow \$1,200 to build a stone schoolhouse.

The activity of the Territorial Government indirectly caused the disappearance of the Pioneers' Society. In 1884 the practice of granting financial assistance to agricultural societies was approved, and in 1886 the Territorial Council made a grant in aid of a fair, which had been sought by the Central Saskatchewan Agricultural Society in Saskatoon. With the appearance of this Society, the Pioneers' Society was dissolved in 1887. The activities of the Agricultural Society were narrower in scope than those of the Pioneers' Society; it confined itself chiefly to the management of the annual fairs.

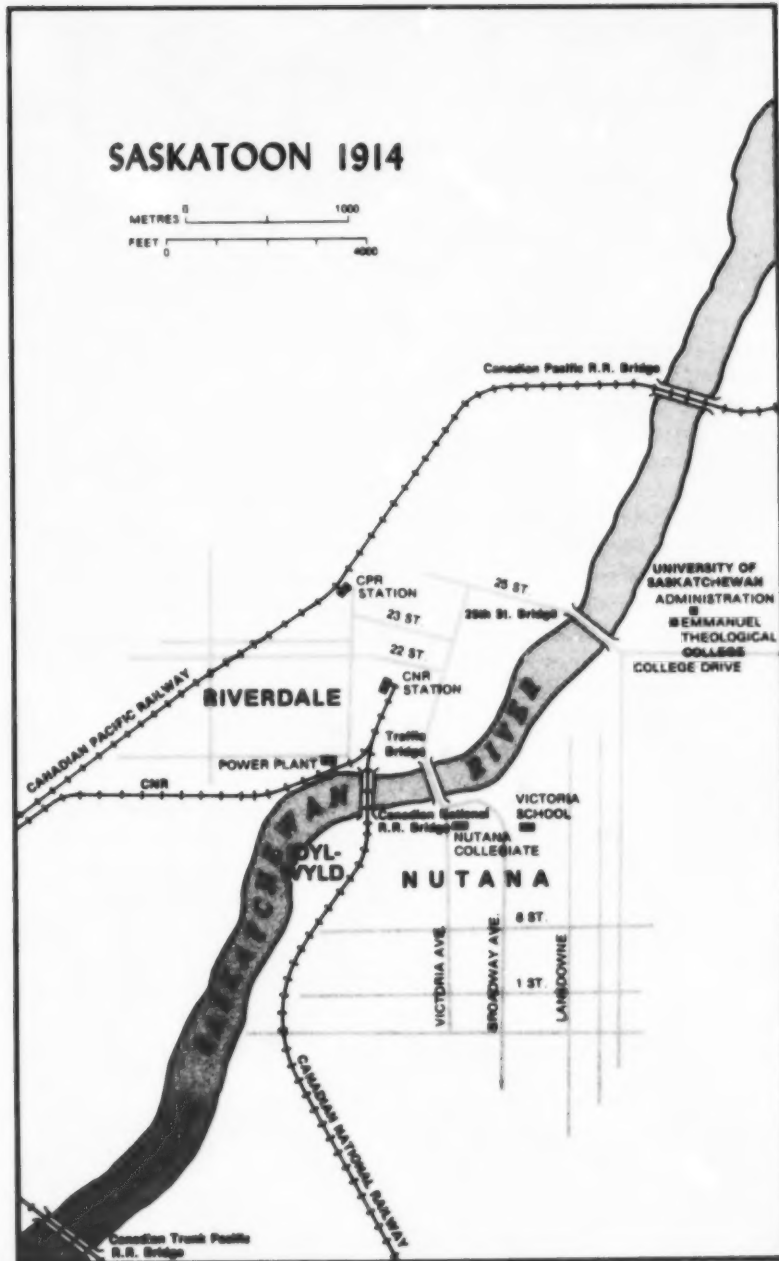
A discussion of the first period of the history of Saskatoon would be incomplete without reference to religion.²⁷ The background of the pioneer settlers was such that the church played an important role in community life. Although a number of denominations were represented in the settlement, the Methodists were undoubtedly the largest group. However, during the first years the Sunday services were interdenominational and were held in the school house. John N. Lake and his brother were the preachers during their stay in Saskatoon in 1883. The following year, declared one pioneer, "the services were . . . held by the people themselves, someone would read a sermon, if a missionary or clergyman happened to be passing through, they would enlist his services."²⁸ Isolated frontier areas have often proved to be the birthplace of new sects and the burying ground of traditional religious loyalties. But the home mission programs of the eastern churches prevented such a development at Saskatoon. The Methodists were the first to send a student missionary, and the first to build a church (1893) and establish an ordained minister. But during the eighties the Presbyterians and the Anglicans also made Saskatoon one of their mission points, and in 1890 a Roman Catholic priest from Prince Albert began regular visits. The Baptists began to hold regular services in 1903.²⁹

Although the Riel Rebellion was the most spectacular event in the first period of the history of Saskatoon, the advent of the railway was of more fundamental importance. This railway was one of the so-called "colonization railways" which received grants of Dominion lands in accordance with the number of miles of line which they constructed in Manitoba and the North-West Territories. One of these, the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan Railroad and Steamboat Company, built a line from Regina to Prince Albert during 1889-90. It reached Saskatoon in 1890, where a bridge was constructed on the site chosen by Lake eight years before. The railway station was built on the west side of the river. The railroad was not an active colonizing agent; this fact, coupled with the inhospitable aspect of the land created by climatic conditions and ignorance of dry-farming methods, limited the progress which might have been expected after 1890. Most of the first

homesteaders in the 1880s engaged in subsistence mixed farming, since the lack of transport prevented export. After the arrival of the railway, large ranches appeared south of Saskatoon permitting cattle shipments to outside markets. Most of the population growth in the 1890s was in the neighbouring rural area. The arrival of the Mennonite settlers at Rosthern about forty miles north on the rail line during 1891, presaged the later agricultural development of the district surrounding Saskatoon. One pioneer has testified that "as late as 1900 it looked as though it would be a great many years before the country would be settled."¹⁰ The census figures for 1901 indicate that there were only 234 persons living in the eight townships surrounding the one in which Saskatoon is located.

The railway, however, did have three important effects on Saskatoon during the 1890s. First, Saskatoon became the shipping point for the range cattle industry which flourished in the district at that time. Second, it became the terminus for traffic moving to and from the Battleford district. This traffic introduced a stagecoach era in Saskatoon's history. Third, the location of the station resulted in the transfer or extension of the name *Saskatoon* to the west of the river, and laid the foundation for urban development there. On the arrival of the railway, the Temperance Colonization Company surveyed a townsite centering on the station, in a grid pattern with streets (and avenues intersecting them) designated by numbers rather than names.¹¹ The station and freightyards were a magnet for new commercial activity. Here, by the turn of the century, were hotels, stores, drays, stables, a lumber yard, warehouses, other retail and service premises, and also the main post office. Naturally a residential area developed near this business complex, necessitating the opening of a school in 1901. These developments generated some bitterness among the pioneers settled in or near the original townsite, particularly when the aggressive newcomers on the west side secured incorporation of the village of Saskatoon in 1901. Thenceforth the hamlet on the east side was known as Nutana, and was not incorporated as a village until 1903.

The lifestyle and outlook of the two rival communities display subtle differences. The pioneers in the first townsite, later renamed Nutana, had been noted for qualities of optimism, neighborliness, and courage in adversity during the early years; these have become part of the folklore of Saskatoon. The residents of the west side village, on the other hand, were activists, ambitious in the pursuit of material gain, less moralistic, as indicated by an attempt to open a bar in 1899.¹² They were the first of the Saskatoon boosters, who saw unlimited opportunities for profit in the boom years of 1901 to 1913.



While the Temperance Colonization Society brought the first settlers to Saskatoon, it did not create the village, the town or the city. These were the achievements of the citizens themselves. In 1901 Saskatoon was a small trade center similar to others which were to be found in the prairie region. It might have remained a village, despite the tide of immigration to northern Saskatchewan. Yet by 1906 it had become a city with 3,000 inhabitants, and ten years later its population was over 21,000. What were the forces which produced this transformation? To understand the development of the city in the second period of its history one must consider the conditions of urban growth in the Canadian plains region at this time. By 1901 it was apparent that a period of great development was at hand. The advance of the frontier of settlement had been gaining momentum during the latter half of the 1890s. This meant the rise of urban centers, based either on commerce or the location of government institutions, or a combination of the two. The wheat economy demanded the establishment of a large number of village or town trade centers, linked up with a limited number of commercial cities situated at the junction points of several railway lines. The location of government institutions, on the other hand, depended upon the transportation facilities possessed by a community, the distribution of population in the province, or political considerations. Nowhere in Canada has the development of urban centers been more influenced by the decisions of governments and railway companies. The uniform topography of the prairies placed a large number of small centers on an equal footing as aspirants for the possession of railway facilities and public institutions. Only a few possessed natural advantages as townsites, and these were either shared with others in the vicinity, or were not sufficiently marked to discourage rivals. Since the prizes were few and time was short, the scramble was exciting. Keen rivalry developed between villages or towns, reaching its high point during the first decade of the present century, and exercising an influence which persists even today.

It was out of this milieu that the pioneer townsman of the prairies appeared. It was inevitable that he would be a booster, for boosting was essential to progress and prosperity.³³ As the editor of the *Zealandia Telegram* noted in 1910:

In 1903 Saskatoon was nothing. Today it is everything. Why?

It was merely a village on the railroad, what Zealandia is today. There was nothing remarkable about the place but its name. It has nothing today in the way of physical advantages that cannot be traced to the enterprise of the people who settled there. That was the only thing that it had and still has—an interested band of hustlers.³⁴

Good citizenship and boosting were synonymous. As one pioneer Saskatoon merchant put it:

All were imbued with an optimism that Saskatoon was destined to become an important centre. Newcomers in business were welcomed and encouraged; everyone pulled together to develop and boom the town; there were no petty jealousies of one another.³⁵

The philosophy or outlook of the pioneer booster was surcharged with an optimism which sometimes resulted in self-deception, but it was never blind to the essentials of urban growth. There was a strain of realism in it.

During 1902 Saskatoon began to feel the influence of the rising tide of western migration. In this year E. J. Meilicke of Minnesota bought land in the vicinity, which he sold to farmers from the northwestern states, who were experienced in dry farming. In the same year the Saskatchewan Valley Land Company was formed, and among the lands it secured were those held by the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan Railway Company. This land company initiated a vigorous advertising campaign, and succeeded in introducing a large number of settlers, many of them from the United States. Saskatoon also felt the effect of British migration to Canada. In 1903 a large group of English immigrants led by an Anglican clergymen detained at Saskatoon. A few of these "Barr colonists" settled in the vicinity, but the majority continued by trail to the tract of land which had been selected for them near the Alberta boundary. Saskatoon shared in the publicity which attended the movement of the Barr colonists, but the chief benefit was the stimulation given to the business life of the town. The pioneer merchants prospered and new stores opened. At the end of 1903 the local paper surveyed the year's trading activity with satisfaction: it reported that over 1,000 cars of settlers' effects had arrived at Saskatoon, and that Saskatoon merchants had sold 500 wagons, 800 ploughs, 150 mowers, 50 binders and 1,000 horses.³⁶

With the settlement of northern Saskatchewan in prospect, the residents of Saskatoon made an effort to secure for their village the full benefit of this development. The activities of the boosters, simple at first, became more and more ambitious throughout this second period of Saskatoon's history. One of the most important agencies for stimulating optimism and cooperation among the pioneer townsmen of the prairies was the little newspaper which appeared in almost every town and village. Its editor, however humble his literary gifts, could wax lyrical when he contemplated the virtues and potentialities of the local community. There was much jubilation when in 1902 a weekly newspaper was established in Saskatoon, called *The Phoenix*. In the following year the organization of a Board of Trade gave Saskatoon another agency for mobilizing local opinion and influencing the decisions of governments and business in the interest of the village.

Throughout the second period, but particularly during the early

part of it, the sale of farm lands in the district surrounding Saskatoon was an important objective of the promoters of the town. Probably the first instance of cooperative effort on the part of the businessmen was in this sphere. One of the pioneer merchants, James Clinskill, commented on it as follows:

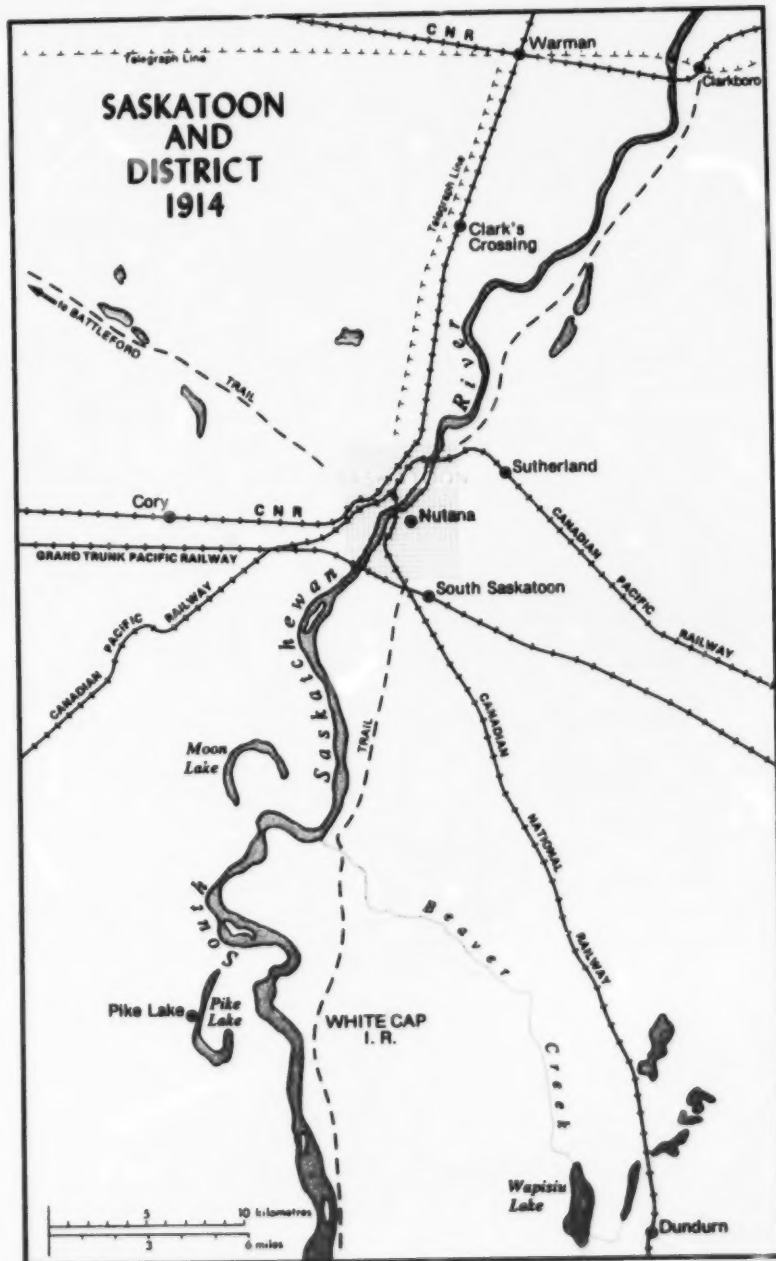
Some Americans, including E. J. Meilicke, were beginning to come in looking over the lands. A few of us subscribed a fund to look after these people and take them into the country to show them around. Our efforts had a fair amount of success.³⁷

Later, various publicity methods were employed to disseminate information on farm lands.

Municipal organization was essentially a technique of boosting: it advertised the community and gave it a dignity which its physical appearance could not impart; it was the means of obtaining credit for developmental purposes; it was an act of faith, an expression of confidence in the future. Thus in 1901 Saskatoon had constituted itself a village—by counting all the shacks as houses. Two years later the overseer of the village led a movement to secure the incorporation of the town. He has left a description of his efforts which is a classic in the literature of prairie town development:

... thinking over the possibilities as to the future of the community, I felt that we should spend considerable money in the way of grading the streets and building some sidewalks. My idea was if we were going to make progress we had to put our best foot forward. At that time there were two or three good centers in Saskatchewan and I thought Saskatoon had as good a chance as any of them. ... After sizing up the needs and the fact that we could borrow 5 per cent of our assessment, which was a little better than \$6,000.00 I found that under a town charter double that amount could be borrowed. The result was that I called a meeting of the few rate-payers of Saskatoon and brought the matter before the meeting applying for town incorporation. There were objectioners at that meeting who could see nothing but that we were going to increase the taxes. However, the better opinion prevailed and I was instructed to take a census of Saskatoon and see if we could get a sufficient number of people to qualify for a special act of incorporation under which we had to have over 450 people. Just before the Barr Colonists arrived sometime early in April, I took a census of Saskatoon. It took less than half a day, and I took everybody in sight because I had an object in view and enumerated a number of people registered at hotels who had not fully decided to become residents of Saskatoon but if things turned out as expected they would. I put them down and got the 450 people. In April 1903 we applied for our incorporation as a town which was granted on July 1st, 1903.³⁸

Increased borrowing power was also the main consideration in the incorporation of the city in 1906. It was on this occasion that the village of Nutana, and the village of Riversdale which had been organized by



real estate promoters on the west edge of the town in 1905, ended their independent existence and became a part of the new municipality.

The convergence of railway lines at Saskatoon was the foundation of its growth during this period. Up to 1905 the town was still on a branch line—the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan line from Regina to Prince Albert, then controlled by the CPR. For a time it seemed quite possible that Saskatoon would be by-passed by all three transcontinental lines. Warman, fourteen miles north, where the main line of the Canadian Northern intersected the Regina-Prince Albert line, might have surpassed Saskatoon as a railway and commercial center. But the decision of the Grand Trunk Pacific in 1905 to run its main line through Saskatoon, opened the way for the further growth of the town. This decision was the direct result of the influence of a two-man Saskatoon delegation to Ottawa, which prevailed upon the company to abandon its original plan of crossing the river forty miles to the south, and route it through the town.³⁹ During 1906 the Canadian Northern bought the Regina-Prince Albert line, and in the following year began to build west from Saskatoon to Calgary. In 1907 Saskatoon was again on the CPR, for in this year the company extended its line from Yorkton to the city, which was later pushed on towards Alberta. These railway developments, all coming within three years, are a measure of the tempo of progress in the West during this period. By 1907 Saskatoon's future as the commercial center of northern Saskatchewan was assured.

Success in bringing the Grand Trunk line to Saskatoon stimulated the boosters to further efforts. During 1905 and 1906 the question of the permanent location of the capital of the new province of Saskatchewan was being considered. The Board of Trade and influential citizens joined in an attempt to secure a decision in favor of Saskatoon, but to no avail.⁴⁰ This failure made the residents even more concerned when the question of the location of the provincial university arose after the passage of the University Act in 1907. All the towns which aspired to obtain this institution made special offers of land; in order to put Saskatoon on an equal footing with its competitors, several prominent citizens guaranteed "that a site suitable and satisfactory to the board of governors would be procured at a cost not exceeding one hundred dollars an acre and of at least one thousand acres extent adjacent to the city."⁴¹ This offer indicates the concern of the citizens, but it was not of decisive importance, for other circumstances determined the decision of the Board of Governors in favor of Saskatoon.⁴² With the location of the university there in 1909, the basic features of the economic and social life of the city were fixed. It was already a commercial center; it now became the center of higher education in the province.

By 1909 Saskatoon was in possession of the major assets which human efforts had added to those bestowed by nature. Their stimulating effect is reflected in the growth which took place in the years between 1909 and 1913. Between 1906 and 1912 about one hundred wholesale firms were established in what boosters called "the Hub City." In 1911 the city boundaries were extended to include over three times the original area of the city. Between 1906, the year in which the city was incorporated, and 1911, the population increased from 3,011 to 12,004. The Board of Trade, however, condemned the latter figure as inaccurate, and made its own count with university students as census takers; this effort succeeded in producing 27,527 inhabitants, but the Dominion census authorities refused to be impressed. Saskatoon appeared in the official census of 1916 with a population of 21,048. Building permits are another measure of the development of these years. They show a rapid rise from 1909 to the peak year 1912.

To attract industry, the city borrowed heavily to provide an infrastructure of paved streets, sewers, sidewalks and municipally owned waterworks, power plant and street railway. In addition, there was a costly contribution to the building of the fourth bridge. To finance these ventures, city bonds had been sold in eastern Canada, the United States, Britain and western Europe.⁴³

A visitor to Saskatoon in 1913 would have seen many buildings which still stand in the central business district. There were also eight public schools, Nutana Collegiate, and a Normal school. Seven of the city's largest churches had been erected, along with five buildings at the university. There were three bridges spanning the river, and a fourth under construction. Even the handsome homes of the real estate magnates which still attract attention today date from this period. Indeed, by 1914 the chief physical features of the present day city had appeared. The growth during the 1920s was slower, and involved a filling of interstices in the business and residential districts already established.

It was inevitable that these tangible evidences of progress, coupled with the philosophy of the pioneer townsman, should have produced greatly inflated hopes and plans. The booster viewpoint, when stimulated by success, was transformed into the boom viewpoint, which could see no limits to the development of the city. This was a phase in the history of urban development everywhere on the frontier. The anatomy and life history of a boom are among the most fascinating phenomena in the history of these communities.⁴⁴

The staple of the prairie town boom was land, particularly town lots, although farm lands were an important constituent. In Saskatoon it began in the fall of 1910 and continued in an upward

spiral until the end of 1913, and was brought to an end by the outbreak of the war. The boom grew out of a real, not a fictitious, advance in values—the West was growing rapidly during this period of nationwide prosperity, and a substantial increase in land values could be justified. For example, one church bought a piece of land in the business district for \$450 in 1904 and sold it for \$42,000 in 1910, and the purchaser probably made a sound investment at the latter price. But such transactions gave birth to the view that the growth of the city was limitless. Prices were hitched to dreams. The theme song became “Getting Rich Quick in Saskatoon,” composed and sung by the 156 real estate dealers listed in *Henderson's Directory* for 1914, and there were few who did not at least hum the tune. One dealer has left the following description of the boom:

Very few properties were purchased for cash in Saskatoon during the boom days. The chief concern was to raise money enough for an initial cash payment. Future payments, it was assumed, would take care of themselves. In many cases there were no future payments, so far as the first or even fourth or fifth purchasers were concerned, for in many cases property was sold and resold as often as six times within a brief period. . . . The great wave of investment money which poured into Saskatoon during the boom years was only in a small degree local money, although local investors threw their entire resources into the widely fluctuating real estate market. . . . Investors sent money to purchase Saskatoon real estate from all over Canada, from every state in the United States, from England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, Australia and Belgium. . . . You could sell anything, anywhere, to anybody, at any price.⁴⁵

Subdivisions, developed for speculative profit, sprouted in all directions: forty square miles outside the city limits were divided into town lots and sold to eastern Canadian and American speculators. With the end of the boom they reverted to farm land.

* * *

The wheat boom ended in western Canada in 1913. Lower prices for wheat, higher freight rates and the ending of the massive influx of British capital occasioned by worry over the prospect of war in Europe, a decline in immigration—these forces combined to produce a severe drop in the price of farm land and urban real estate. The civic budget had to be drastically reduced. The years from 1914 to 1920 were depressing ones for Saskatoon, not alone from the casualties among its citizen soldiers overseas. There was a cessation of immigration, a sharp drop in building permits, a drastic cut in expenditures on uncompleted paving, sewage, water, and electrical projects. There was a sharp decline in the number of real estate firms, many going bankrupt.⁴⁶ An increasing number of lots reverted to the city because of unpaid taxes. Some businesses left the city. The large city debt incurred during the

boom years produced a crisis in city financing, forcing the council to abandon borrowing and to adopt "cash only" financing. The only important new structures during these years were the Dominion Government elevator, just west of the city, and the new traffic bridge near the university. On this subdued note the first dramatic thirty-eight years of Saskatoon's history comes to a close.

NOTES

- ¹ W. F. Butler, *The Great Lone Land* (London, 1872).
- ² *Canada Sessional Papers* (C.S.P.) 1882, Paper No. 18.
- ³ *House of Commons Debates*, 1882, pp. 803-4.
- ⁴ A. S. Morton, *History of Prairie Settlement* (Toronto, 1938), p. 74.
- ⁵ Charter and By-laws of the Temperance Colonization Society, Lake Mss., University of Saskatchewan Library, Special Collection, A. S. Morton Papers, hereinafter cited as Lake Mss.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ Department of the Interior, File No. 56857 2, P.A.C.
- ⁸ *Narratives of Saskatoon, 1882-1912* (Saskatoon: University Bookstore, 1927), p. 16. Hereinafter cited as *Narratives*.
- ⁹ M. Pattison, *Cory in Recall: History of Cory* (Cory, Sask., 1967), p. 13.
- ¹⁰ Map of the townsite of Saskatoon, surveyed by F. L. Blake, D.L.S. in Lake Mss. Reproduced in smaller scale in W. P. Delaney and W. A. S. Sarjeant, *Saskatoon: The Growth of a City* (Saskatoon, 1974), p. 4.
- ¹¹ *Journals of the Council of the North-West Territories 1883*, p. 43.
- ¹² See André Lalonde, "Settlement in the North-West Territories by Colonization Companies, 1881-1891," Ph.D. Thesis (Laval, 1969), p. 97. The Lalonde work contains many important references to the early history of Saskatoon. Livingston was dismissed by the stockholders in December, 1883 for incompetence and dishonesty.
- ¹³ See Department of the Interior File No. 56857 2, Petition of the Temperance Colonization Society to the Minister of the Interior [September] 1884, and report of the Minister of Justice, Oct. 8, 1884. See also Macpherson to Macdonald (private), May 19, 1884 in Macdonald Papers, P.A.C.
- ¹⁴ C.S.P., 1887, Paper No. 7, p. xxxvii.
- ¹⁵ C.S.P., 1885, Paper No. 13, p. 18.
- ¹⁶ Collection of narratives made by Dr. E. Seaborn, University of Saskatchewan Library, Special Collections.
- ¹⁷ *Narratives*, p. 45.
- ¹⁸ Department of the Interior File No. 56857 2.
- ¹⁹ C.S.P., 1886, Paper No. 12, p. cxxiii.
- ²⁰ *McPhillips' Alphabetical and Business Directory of the District of Saskatchewan, N.W.T.* (Qu'Appelle, 1888).
- ²¹ Minutes of the Central Saskatchewan Agricultural Society, University of Saskatchewan Library, Special Collections.
- ²² Gerald Willoughby, "Retracing the Old Trail," University of Saskatchewan Library, Special Collections.
- ²³ University of Saskatchewan Library, Special Collections.
- ²⁴ Order in Council, Sept. 19, 1885. Orders in Council of the North-West Territories, Archives of Saskatchewan.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 1, 1883.
- ²⁶ The Protestant Public School District of Saskatoon No. 13 was established by a Proclamation of the Lieutenant-Governor on Feb. 28, 1885, and on Dec. 10 the N.W.T. Council approved a grant of \$75 in aid of the teacher's salary. Archives of Saskatchewan.
- ²⁷ See (Saskatoon) *Saturday Press*, Dec. 10, 1910.
- ²⁸ *Narratives*, p. 44.
- ²⁹ Willoughby, "Retracing the Old Trail," p. 47; *Saturday Press*, Dec. 10, 1910.
- ³⁰ Willoughby, "Retracing the Old Trail."
- ³¹ Town plans in Land Titles Office, Saskatoon.
- ³² B. B. Peel and E. Knowles, *The Saskatoon Story, 1882-1952* (Saskatoon, 1952), p. 37.
- ³³ See D. C. Kerr, "Saskatoon, 1910-1913: Ideology of the Boomtime," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXXII (1979), pp. 16-28.
- ³⁴ *Zealandia Telegram*, 1910, quoted in the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, May 24, 1941, p. 20.
- ³⁵ *Narratives*, p. 67.

- ³⁶ *Saskatoon Phoenix*, Christmas edition, 1903.
- ³⁷ *Narratives*, p. 57.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 70, and Peel and Knowles, *Saskatoon Story*, p. 44.
- ⁴⁰ See Jean F. Murray, "The Provincial Capital Controversy in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. V (Autumn 1952), pp. 81-105.
- ⁴¹ *Narratives*, p. 78.
- ⁴² See Jean F. Murray, "The Contest for the University of Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XII (Winter 1959), pp. 1-30.
- ⁴³ See Delaney and Sargeant, *Saskatoon*, pp. 26-29.
- ⁴⁴ For an excellent discussion of the philosophy of the boom see D. C. Kerr, "Saskatoon."
- ⁴⁵ S. W. Johns in *Saskatoon Daily Star*, June 30, 1927, p. 31.
- ⁴⁶ Real estate dealers listed in *Henderson's Directory*, 1914 numbered 156. The same source for 1921 indicates that there were only 52 in the city.

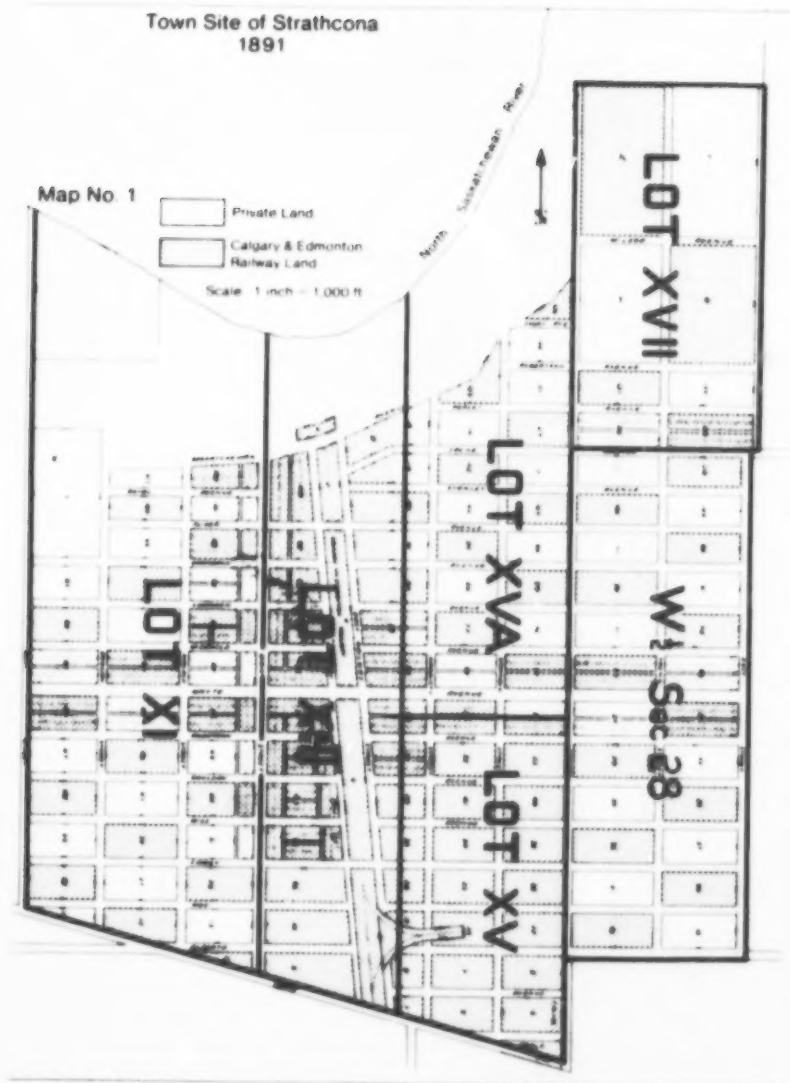
FAILED METROPOLIS: THE CITY OF STRATHCONA, 1891-1912

JOHN GILPIN

Between 1891 and 1912 a separate urban community existed on the south side of the North Saskatchewan River across from Edmonton. This fact runs counter to the pattern of urban growth which had characterized Edmonton since the early 1870s, when the first buildings were constructed outside the walls of Fort Edmonton on the north side of the river. The separate community was known as the unincorporated town of South Edmonton from 1891 to 1899, and the incorporated Town City of Strathcona from 1899 to 1912.¹

The emergence of a separate south side community can be traced to the townsite development activities of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company [C&ER]. It had been incorporated in 1890 for the purpose of constructing and operating a railway "from a point on the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, within the town of Calgary, to a point at or near Edmonton, with power to extend southerly to the International boundary . . . and northerly to the Peace River."² Between March 1891 and October 1892 the company acquired from owners of land across the river from Edmonton sufficient property up to a maximum of thirteen and one-half acres for a right-of-way and station grounds, plus a half interest in a remaining portion of land in return for the construction of a station and engine shed (see Map 1). The agreements between the company and the land owners further specified that the survey of the new townsite would be undertaken by the company with the cost being shared equally among the parties and, finally, that following the survey the land would be divided or jointly sold by an agent.

The survey of the townsite by the C&ER was begun in July 1891, the same month that the railway line from Calgary reached the future community. The survey plan was registered in September and the land was placed in the hands of the Calgary and Edmonton Townsite Company, the affairs of which were, in turn, administered by the firm of Osler, Hammond and Nanton. The sale of property began in August.



The rapid pace of these businesslike developments tends to mask the dramatic fact that the C&ER was attempting to alter a long-established pattern of urban growth by, in effect, forcing the relocation of the settlement of Edmonton to the south side of the river. This interpretation is suggested by an article entitled "Edmonton's Progress" which appeared in the August 26, 1891, *Manitoba Daily Free Press*. This article, which appeared approximately one month after the completion of the railway, was provided by "a prominent business man of Winnipeg, who [had] just returned from a trip to Edmonton and vicinity...."

The new town of Edmonton has been established by The Calgary & Edmonton Railway Company at its terminus on the south side of the Saskatchewan just opposite the fort. . . . The banks of the Saskatchewan at that point are about two hundred and fifty feet high, and the river is about twice the width of the Red [River in Winnipeg] so that it has been found necessary to locate the new town permanently on the south side. The present location, however, gives the old settlement easy access to the terminus, and as soon as a traffic bridge, which is to be built, is ready the new place will, it is anticipated, make rapid progress and absorb the business of the district. Great confidence in the new city's future is felt at Edmonton and vicinity. . . .

Further documentation of the company's objective can be found in correspondence from A. M. Nanton, writing on behalf of the C&ER to John Carling, Minister of Agriculture. In this letter Nanton suggested that the immigration hall and other public buildings proposed for the Edmonton settlement should be constructed on the railway townsite:

From the rapid progress made at the Railway town and because of the advantages of the location and the great improbability of the line ever being carried across the River at what is known as the former Edmonton Settlement, it is altogether likely that the present terminal point will be the business centre of that district. Any Public Buildings to be erected there should, we venture to suggest, in order to meet the requirements of the district and to be conveniently situated, be located within convenient distances of the Railway station and on the South side of the River.¹

The Dominion Government did not adopt a policy of relocating its offices to the new townsite. However, in May of 1892, Thomas Anderson, who was the Dominion Land and Crown Timber Agent in Edmonton, suggested in a letter to Mr. A. M. Burgess, Acting Deputy Minister of the Department of the Interior, that it would be advisable to have the Government offices adjoining the immigrant shed at the station "so that the Immigrant when housed in the shed would only have to go next door to make his entry & then remove direct to his land & future home, instead of at present having to go over to the north side

3 miles & cross in a scow & return to his family."⁴ On June 7 the transfer was authorized. The citizens of Edmonton, however, intervened to prevent the transfer from taking place. In Frank Oliver's opinion the "Great Land Office Steal" was "a side scheme put up by the local agent, the inspector of agencies and the Minister of [the] Interior at the instigation of those very slick gentlemen, Osler, Hammond & Nanton...."⁵

In addition to pressing for the construction of public buildings at the new townsite, the promoters of the C&ER were also prepared to foster industrial development. In the August 22, 1891 issue of the *Edmonton Bulletin*, F. P. Brothers, traffic manager for the C&ER, was reported to have stated that

Wm. Mackenzie of the construction company is now preparing the plans for a large roller process flour mill, to be erected near the Edmonton station on the bank of the river. It will contain the most improved machinery and it is intended to be ready to grind this season's crop.

This report was confirmed by a notice published in the February 20, 1892 issue of the *Edmonton Bulletin* which stated that an application would be made for Letters Patent by William Mackenzie, James Ross, Herbert S. Holt, Donald D. Mann and Augustus Meredith Nanton for the creation of

The Edmonton Milling Company, for the purpose and with the power of conducting a milling business and of buying, selling and dealing in grain and produce in the Edmonton Settlement and throughout the Northwest Territories of Canada, with its chief place of business at said Edmonton Settlement.

The Calgary and Edmonton Railway promoters, however, failed to follow through with these intentions. They also failed to concern themselves with the operation of the railway after its construction to Strathcona and with its extension north to the Peace River as provided for in the Act of Incorporation. In 1891 the C&ER was leased to the Canadian Pacific Railway, whereupon the provisional shareholders departed to pursue other goals and enjoy the benefits to be derived from the land holdings of the Company. William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, however, were to return to play a significant role in thwarting the C&ER's objective of creating a metropolis at its northern terminus.⁶

The CPR was cautious in dealing with the promoters and in considering the question of the upgrading of the system. Such an approach and the reason behind it were outlined in a letter from Sir Thomas Shaughnessy to W. Whyte dated May 4, 1892:

Some time ago you wrote me on the subject of fencing on the Calgary & Edmonton Road, enclosing this letter from Mr.

Gilmer. You understand that we are operating this railway and the Regina & Long Lake under short lease and we should not expend one unnecessary penny in permanent improvements while there is a possibility of the roads passing out of our hands at the end of three or four years. It will be cheaper to take our chances on paying for an occasional cow killed, than expend considerable sums in fencing lines over which our control may be so shortlived.⁷

Thus, within a year after its establishment, Strathcona had been abandoned by its creators and had been reluctantly accepted as a ward by the CPR.

The idea originally formulated by the promoters of the C&ER that they were creating the future metropolitan centre for northern Alberta on the south side of the river did not, however, decline completely. The great expectations for and confidence in the future growth of Strathcona were perpetuated and elaborated upon by various citizens and organizations within the community. The history of Strathcona to 1912 is largely the fate of this idea in the changing circumstances of these years.

The local press and the Strathcona Board of Trade were foremost amongst Strathcona's boosters. Between 1894 and 1912 at least three newspapers were published in Strathcona. These included the *Strathcona Chronicle* and the *Strathcona Plaindealer*. The latter newspaper was published over the longest period of time and was the institution most closely identified with the idea of Strathcona as a separate metropolitan community.⁸ The position of editor was held by R. P. Pettiepiece between 1894 and 1896 and by J. Hamilton MacDonald between 1896 and 1912. The primary function of the newspaper, as stated in the first edition, was to promote the interests of the town:

We are desirous of letting outside people know of our excellent farm lands, of what kind of grain, vegetables, etc., can be produced, and of the many advantages the farmers in this district have over those in other parts. . . . We are here in the interests of this town and the people of the district. . . .⁹

By the end of the first year of publication, the newspaper was a staunch guardian of and spokesman for Strathcona's civic pride. Having assumed this responsibility, the paper solicited subscriptions from the citizens on the grounds that they would be contributing to the welfare and promotion of their town:

When we cast our lot with this town some thirteen months ago, a good deal of confidence in the place was required as here seemingly was no room for a newspaper. But as before stated in these columns a newspaper does a great deal to promote a town's interests. . . . And by keeping your local newspaper up to the standard you create a feeling to the outside public that you are a progressive and busy people.¹⁰

Throughout its history, the newspaper consistently promoted the idea of Strathcona as a separate metropolitan community whose best interests would be served by remaining independent of Edmonton. The function of Strathcona within the region was that of an entrepôt for northern Alberta. In order to ensure that such development would come about, the newspaper continually reminded the citizens of their responsibility to create the necessary social, political and economic institutions which would allow them to meet the challenge effectively. The newspaper's frequent calls for the creation of a Board of Trade and for municipal incorporation reflect this concern. An integral part of the metropolitan theme as presented by the *Strathcona Plaindealer* was the idea that the community had possibilities for future growth based on its many "natural advantages" which would serve as a magnet for investment capital.

The second group of Strathcona boosters were the Board of Trade. The initial attempt to create such an institution took place in March 1894. No evidence exists, however, to suggest that an effective ongoing organization was created as a result of this meeting. The fact that Strathcona lacked an effective Board of Trade throughout the 1890s was the subject of editorial comment by the *South Edmonton News*:

Although South Edmonton claims to have a Board of Trade, when one wishes to transact a public matter with the town it is difficult to know to whom to look. For some time past our citizens have been discussing this matter, and we also have been trying to impress upon the businessmen of the town the importance of forming a chartered Board of Trade. . . . There are many matters of municipal interest which should be looked into, discussed and acted upon by all our businessmen jointly. We have now several industries here and their interests, being identical with the Town's, should be protected. Public matters are constantly being brought to our notice in which, if necessary, we could quote several instances where a chartered Board of Trade would be an invaluable institution.¹¹

This plea for action was not answered until May 1901, when a chartered Board of Trade was established. Active members of the organization included J. Hamilton MacDonald, Editor of the *Strathcona Plaindealer*, who served as president for 1905, and James Weir, Editor of the *Strathcona Chronicle*, who served as secretary for 1905 and vice-president in 1908 and 1909. A number of professional people were also involved, including Dr. Wilbert MacIntyre, who served as president for 1903-04, and F. C. Jamieson, member of the law firm of Rutherford and Jamieson, who was vice-president in 1905. G. W. Marriott, manager of the Strathcona Branch of the Bank of Commerce, served as president in 1907. The first president of the Board, who was also a significant independent businessman in the

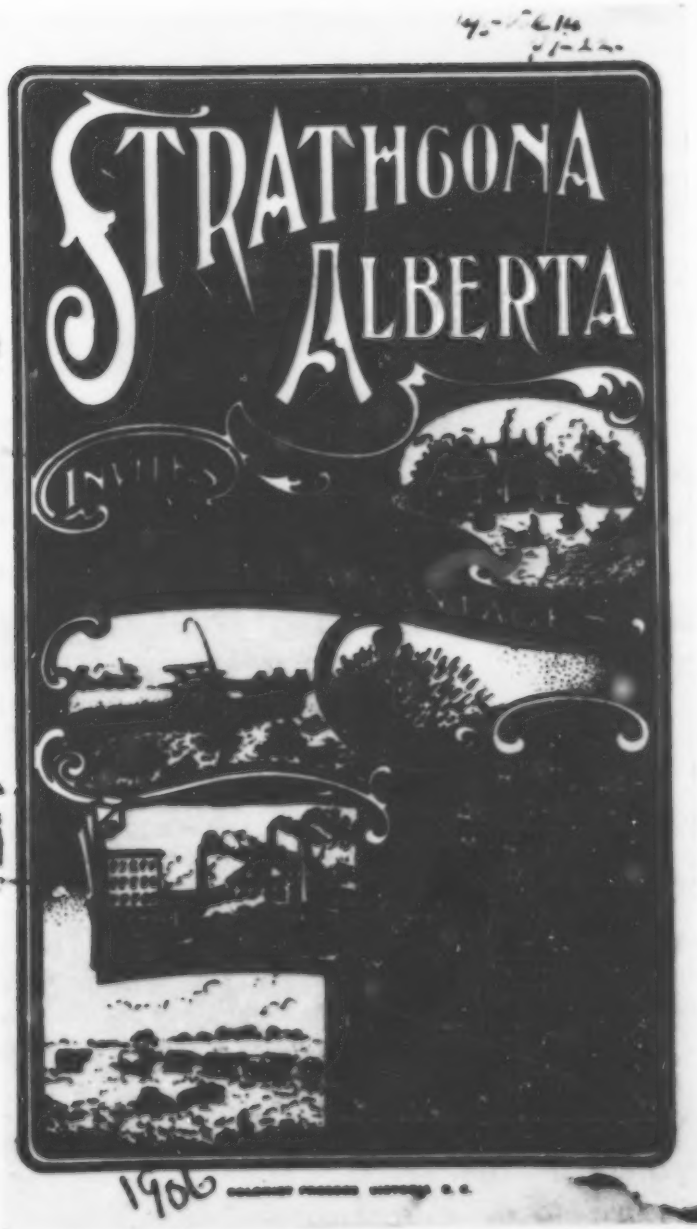


FIGURE 1—AN EXAMPLE OF THE BOOSTER LITERATURE published by the Board of Trade.

community, was J. M. Douglas, who held the office in 1908 and 1909 prior to his election as a Liberal member to the House of Commons. Conspicuously absent from the list of people active in the organization were a number of Strathcona's leading businessmen such as John Walter, John Gainer and W. H. Sheppard.¹²

The metropolitan vision promoted by this organization was very similar to the one contained in the local press. The Board's views as to Strathcona's future were outlined in a series of promotional pamphlets. The first booklet, published in 1903, was entitled *Strathcona: The Railway Town and Manufacturing Centre for Northern Alberta*. This pamphlet outlined a number of ideas, among them the proposition that Strathcona was an influential regional centre. This idea was based on the fact that it was the most important railway town in northern Alberta and that its status would become increasingly significant as other transcontinental railways were built. Strathcona's location as the railway centre for northern Alberta would allow it to perform the role of manufacturing centre and entrepôt for the region. The pamphlet also developed the theme that Strathcona had a number of "natural advantages" which would attract investment capital and captains of industry. Throughout the document, the future greatness of the city was stressed.

An eastern town of 2500 inhabitants has nothing to hope for but existence in the same old rut. The charm of life in a western town having a strategical position in the commerce of a grand blooming district is the assurance of future greatness. It is the morning of life, and we see just ahead the glory of the sun in his might.¹³

Between 1891 and 1902 the realities of Strathcona's economic growth coincided in some degree with the optimism of its boosters. Its industrial development involved primarily the establishment of manufacturing industries which exploited the agricultural potential and timber resources of the Strathcona region as well as the on-site deposits of clay and coal. Its growth as a commercial centre was closely linked to the economic needs of the agricultural community which developed adjacent to it.

The construction of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway permitted large scale agricultural exports from northern Alberta to markets in southern Alberta, British Columbia and eastern Canada. This change constituted an agricultural revolution for the farmers of the district who were now integrated into the wheat economy of the Canadian West. The fact that this change in the economic situation of the district had taken place was noted in an *Edmonton Bulletin* editorial of January 9, 1892:

The fact that we are, for the first time in the history of this district, shipping wheat to the eastern market must bring to the

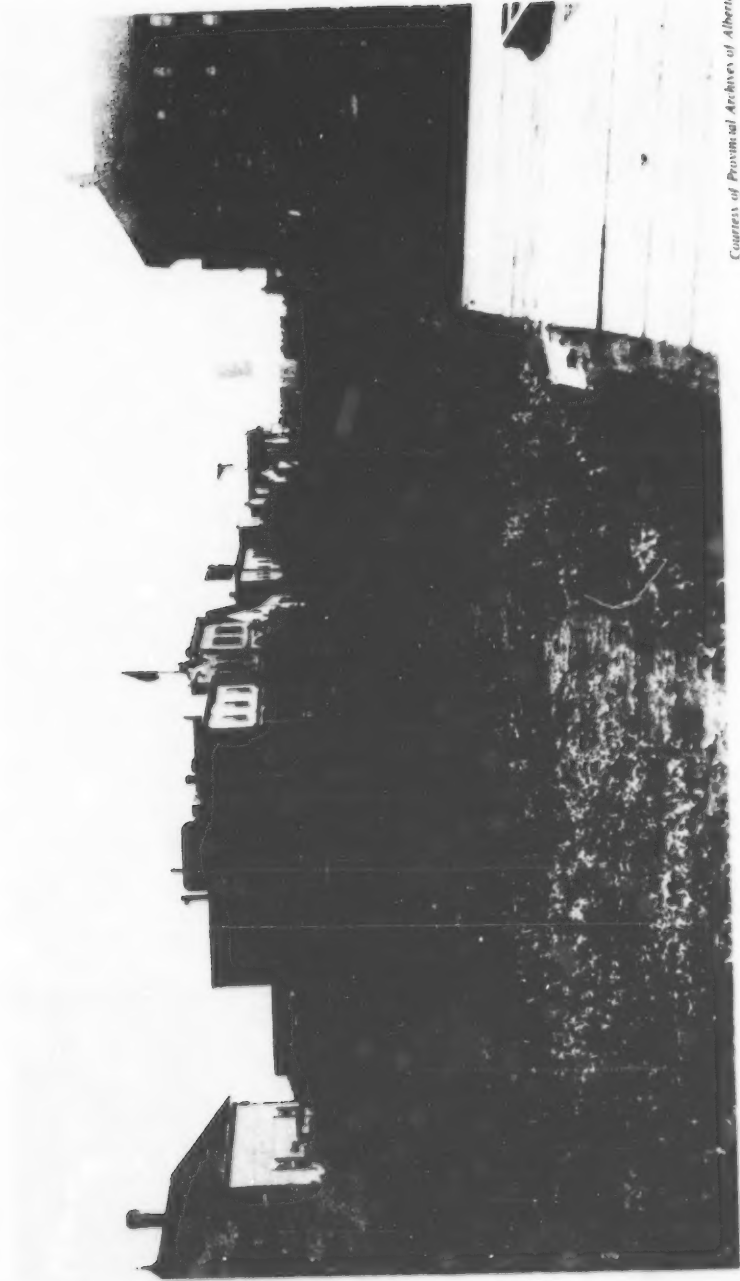
mind of everyone the importance of producing the most suitable grade for that purpose. The presence of wheat buyers has put the matter plainly before us as they declare that the wheat so far shown, although of good quality, is often made up of two or three different kinds which would, alone, be sufficient to prevent its taking a high grade.

The most significant economic activity at Strathcona was therefore related to its position as a marketing, service and manufacturing centre on a rapidly expanding agricultural frontier.

Initially, the grain trade through Strathcona was handled by independent businessmen who were either commission agents or merchants who accepted agricultural staples in exchange for goods required by the farmers. Two individuals who fall into this category were Sam Parrish and W. J. G. Dickson. Sam Parrish, who was the first commission agent to operate out of Strathcona, established a branch of his Calgary business at the new townsite in the spring of 1892. His business operations involved the purchase of timothy seed, oats, wheat, hay and potatoes. In return he sold or traded flour, feed, and seed grain. Parrish operated his Strathcona branch until February of 1893, when he sold a portion of it to Messrs. Dickson and Wilkie. By October 1895 he had sold the remaining portion of his business interests with the exception of the real estate to Malcolm MacIntyre, who had been employed since 1892 as his Strathcona manager.

W. J. G. Dickson started his business career in Strathcona in February 1893, when he purchased, in partnership with William Wilkie, the general store of Sam Parrish. As the successors to Parrish, they sold a variety of groceries and provisions which included eggs, creamery butter and winter apples. This partnership lasted until September 1894, at which time Dickson embarked on a career lasting until 1899 as an independent Strathcona businessman. In his new role as an independent commission agent, Dickson dealt in a full line of agricultural products including livestock, produce and grain. Dickson's business methods and his value to the economic life of Strathcona were noted by the *South Edmonton News*:

Mr. W. J. G. Dickson is another of our young and enterprising pioneers... who has succeeded in erecting an interest in the products of this district, among outside dealers which bids fair to assume gigantic proportions in the future. His policy is based on district lines, each product must be offered in proper order, and although the business done the present season, may be lighter than could have been, Mr. Dickson in taking the stand he does, is establishing a precedent which will result in giving Northern Alberta products a solid hold in the markets of the world for excellence. The farming and stockraising interest of the district, has now through Mr. Dickson's untiring patience, found a foothold which is of vast service to the whole industrial system of the community.¹⁴



Courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta

FIGURE II.—STRATHCONA, DOMINION DAY, 1895. Looking west down Whyte Avenue from C.P.R. Tracks.

Dickson was responsible for the development of west coast markets for Strathcona area beef, pork and poultry. He was appointed sole agent to supply milling oats to the Brackman-Ker Milling Co. of Victoria and New Westminster. In addition to marketing produce, Dickson was the agent for the town properties owned by Sache, Cameron and McLeod. He sold fire insurance, scrip, and improved and unimproved farms; he also loaned money, rented houses and "provided particulars of the town and country upon request."¹⁵

The economic fortunes of Strathcona were not entirely in the hands of such individual entrepreneurs as Parrish and Dickson. Agencies of large firms were established in the community throughout the 1890s. In 1898 the Winnipeg-based Dominion Milling Company constructed an elevator in Strathcona. Earlier in the decade, two other milling companies had begun operation. The Edmonton Milling Company, owned by a number of investors in Ontario, the United States, and Great Britain and capitalized at \$40,000, turned out its first flour in March 1893. The most significant feature of this mill was its use of rollers to process the wheat. In 1895 a second and equally sophisticated mill was built by the Victoria-based Brackman-Ker Company Limited. This mill, which was constructed by Dilbert Bros. Mfg. Co. of San Francisco, was designed primarily to process oats. It was described by the *South Edmonton News* as "the only oatmeal mill in the Northwest and . . . of the most modern type in every particular, being equally as good, if not better than their mills at Victoria and New Westminster."¹⁶

In other areas, Strathcona developed a small meat packing industry in addition to being a shipping point for livestock. The growth of this industry was initiated by John Gainer. Gainer, who was born in St. Mary's, Ontario, in 1858, had spent some time in North Dakota and Pilot Mound, Manitoba, before arriving in Strathcona soon after the completion of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. Upon his arrival he opened a meat market and bakery with a large feed stable attached. Initially, the processing of Strathcona district livestock was done on a modest basis at his butcher shop. By 1902, however, he had constructed a separate slaughterhouse and a brick retail store. Four years later, Gainer had retail meat markets in both Edmonton and Wetaskiwin. Other meat-packing companies also prospered during these years, including the Vogel Meat and Packing Co.—a locally owned and operated concern—and three plants established by Edmonton and Calgary entrepreneurs.¹⁷

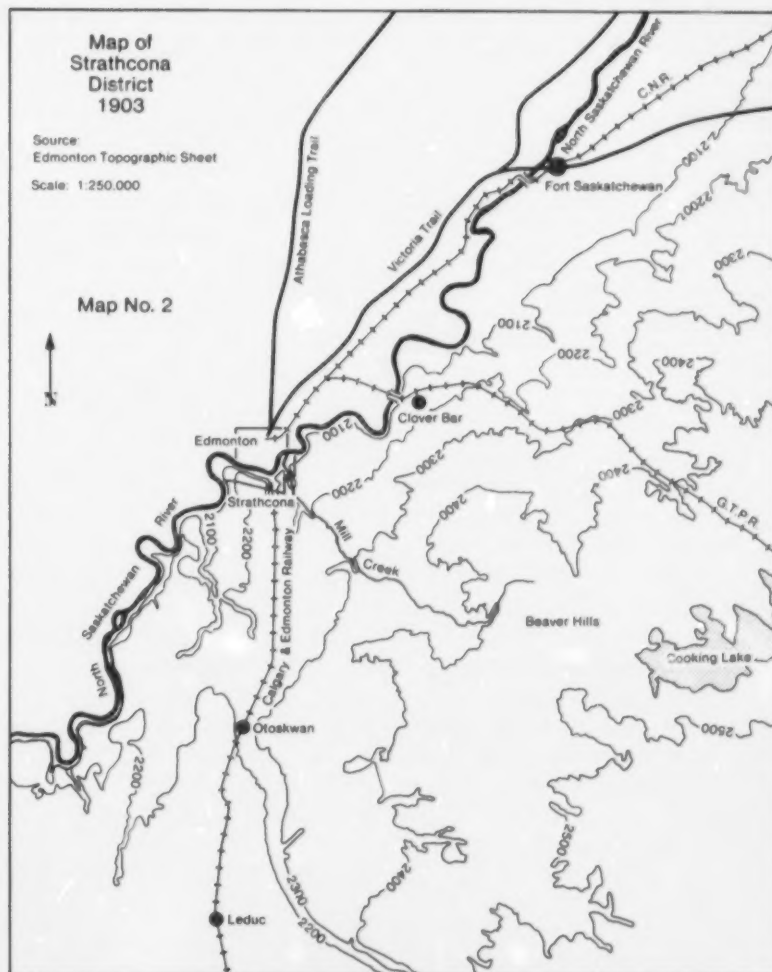
In addition to agricultural commodities, the surrounding district also provided timber resources which were to play a role in the industrial development of Strathcona. The growth of the timber trade was begun in 1894 when John Walter put a portable saw mill into

operation. Walter, a native of the Orkney Islands of Scotland, was one of Strathcona's first citizens as well as one of its most successful entrepreneurs. He had established himself on the south side of the river in the early 1870s after having fulfilled the terms of his contract with the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1895 he joined in a partnership with William Humberstone, an Edmonton-based entrepreneur, in order to establish a permanent operation. By 1911, John Walter Ltd. had two mills in operation with a combined capacity of 140,000 feet of timber per day.¹⁸

Strathcona was also fortunate in having on-site resources available which could support industrial growth. One such resource was clay suitable for the production of bricks. By the turn of the century two brick plants were in operation. The Pollard Brothers employed eighteen men by 1902 to produce an annual output of 1,000,000 bricks. The Edmonton Press Brick Co. Limited during its first year of operation produced an estimated 300,000 bricks. In 1900 about twenty men were engaged at the plant. The economic base of Strathcona was further diversified by the presence of numerous other firms that utilized local resources, including the Strathcona Coal Company, the Twin City Coal Company, the Star Mining Company, and the Strathcona Brewing and Malting Company.¹⁹

The economic opportunities that these commercial and industrial concerns reflected also attracted retail merchants, tradesmen and professional people. The result was growth following its establishment in 1891. Until 1902, however, Strathcona's economic development was characterized by the opportunities presented by its position as the northern terminus of the C&ER and its limited potential for hinterland development. Unlike other railhead communities, Strathcona was never to enjoy a system of transportation linkages which would allow it to dominate the adjacent region. The development of a system of trails diverging from the railhead would have involved the reorganization of an existing trail system focused on Edmonton which had developed by 1891. The principal components of this system were the Winnipeg (Victoria) Trail and the Athabasca Landing Trail (see Map 2). The former trail ran east along the north bank of the North Saskatchewan via Fort Victoria. An alternative route also existed south of the river from Fort Victoria to Fort Saskatchewan. The latter trail was built in 1875-76 by the Hudson's Bay Company in order to link the Athabasca River and North Saskatchewan River transportation systems.

Strathcona's efforts to improve its transportation linkages were directed primarily towards the establishment of a trail directly from the railhead to the region east of Strathcona and the establishment of a ferry at the Stony Plain Crossing of the North Saskatchewan River. Such a change would have eliminated the necessity of at least a portion



of the traffic to and from the area from having to pass through Edmonton.

Strathcona's failure to develop the necessary linkages with a hinterland is reflected in its lack of wholesale companies and the absence of any extensive warehouse facilities. The fact that incoming settlers crossed the river to Edmonton also demonstrates that the trail system, developed in the years before the railway, was continuing to be a vital part of the transportation system of the region after the arrival

of the railway in 1891. The problem Strathcona encountered in attempting to assume a significant role in this system, or impose its own system, illustrates the disadvantages it faced being on the south side of the river.

Throughout its history as an independent community, Strathcona regarded itself as heir to a hinterland loosely described as northern Alberta and northern British Columbia. Any potential for hinterland development to the south was eliminated by the fact that Strathcona was the northern terminus of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. Other townsites developed by the railway were in a better position to claim this region as their own. Hinterland development to the west was hindered by the southwest to northeast course of the North Saskatchewan River, while hinterland development to the east was limited by the existence of the Beaver Hills, which was a region of glacial moraine. The North Saskatchewan River, because of its width and depth, reduced Strathcona's options for gaining access to this northern region. The C&ER had in fact made a poor choice for its northern terminus, given its objective of establishing a new focus for urban growth in the region, by choosing a location that inflicted significant geographical restraints on its future growth. Strathcona, in short, failed to achieve its primary economic goal of "drawing to itself the commerce of the region."

Another aspect of Strathcona's problem of a limited hinterland was the fact that the "Old Settlement of Edmonton" had not, despite predictions in the Winnipeg press, willingly relocated to the south side of the river. Edmonton's unwillingness to co-operate was outlined by Frank Oliver in an editorial which was written in response to the article already noted entitled "Edmonton's Progress."

In explanation of the above it may not be out of place to remark that since the location of the railway terminus it has been found necessary—from the fact that nine-tenths of the population and ninety-nine hundredths of the trade of the Edmonton district and tributary country is on the north side—to locate the town of Edmonton permanently just where it always was, on the North bank of the Saskatchewan, which, as it has comparatively easy access to the railway station, will continue to absorb the business of the district as that increases from year to year. . . . Edmonton—the old, only, and original—is doing very well, thank you, out of the fact of its having been given railway communication, and the surrounding district is increasing in population and prosperity at a more rapid rate than any other section of the Northwest.²⁰

One indication of Edmonton's continued dominance was the growth in population; throughout the period under study, Edmonton continued to maintain a distinct lead over its southern rival (see Table I).

Perhaps spurred on by the actions of the C&ER in stopping across

TABLE I

POPULATION GROWTH IN STRATHCONA
AND EDMONTON, 1892-1911

Year	Strathcona	Edmonton	Source
1892	— *	700	Town Census
1895	505	1,165	NWMP Census
1896	650	— *	Henderson's Directory
1898	900	— *	Henderson's Directory
1899	1,156	— *	Town Census
1901	1,550	2,626	Dominion Census
1905	3,000	8,400	Henderson's Directory
1906	2,921	11,167	Dominion Census
1907	3,500	— *	City Census
1908	4,500	18,500	Henderson's Directory
1911	5,579	24,900	Dominion Census

*Indicates figures unavailable.

the river, Edmonton's progress in other areas was also in advance of Strathcona. Edmonton organized a Board of Trade as early as 1888 while Strathcona did not follow suit until 1902. Similarly, Edmonton initiated its incorporation as a town in 1892, only a matter of days after the announcement by the C&ER that its terminus would be located in Strathcona. Both actions reflected Edmonton's interest in creating two institutions designed to promote its growth and to protect its control of the northern hinterland. To a considerable degree, these institutions, and the determination behind them, were to negate the theoretical advantages Strathcona possessed as a railhead community. Frank Oliver's editorial comment in the *Edmonton Bulletin* of July 18, 1891, demonstrated that the older settlement was prepared to meet Strathcona's challenge: "The only jealousy that need be shown on the part of the citizens of Edmonton towards the new town is a jealousy to excel in everything that makes a town attractive as a place of business, a place of residence or a place of investment."

Equally important, however, was the tardy growth of similar institutions in Strathcona, institutions which might have been of considerable use in pressing for road improvements and the establishment of ferries.²¹ Strathcona's citizens felt that its growth would be logical and that concerted and quick action was unnecessary. The lack of urgency in regard to municipal status is revealed by the fact that this matter was debated for almost a decade before action was taken. On November 15, 1894, one of the first editorials of the *South Edmonton News* pointed out the value of having a town council:

Among the pressing matters which require attention by a corporate body is the protection of the town against fire, as in the present condition of affairs insurance rates are so exorbitant as to all but preclude the idea of insuring buildings and household effects. . . . Other matters which would come within the jurisdiction of such a body would be the maintenance of law and order, the arrest, conviction and incarceration of criminals; the letting of contracts for municipal improvements—such as street grading, light, etc.—and the passing of by-laws for the regulation of affairs generally.

The advantages of incorporation continued to be an important topic for editorial comment by the *South Edmonton News*, which was an ardent supporter of such an undertaking. Numerous letters to the editor were also received on the subject. In July 1895 it was pointed out to the Editor that:

We are now at a stage when delay may result in forever losing the prominence in the district as a commercial centre. Towns surrounding us are grasping for that foremost place, and some of them are well equipped for the battle being banded together in societies, working with one common purpose to gain every possible addition in the furtherance of this object. While South Edmonton is placed naturally in a position commanding all the natural resources of the country, still without organization we will lose many of the advantages which belong of right to the leading market town of the district.²²

Incorporation was also advocated on the grounds that it would make a significant contribution to Strathcona's sense of identity. This argument for incorporation was advanced in June 1898, shortly before a railway link was to be established between the two communities:

It is now stated on reliable authority that work on Pugsley's railway [i.e., the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway] will be begun this summer and extended into Edmonton as soon as the bridge is completed. This makes it more necessary than ever that this town be incorporated with a name of its own independent of the town on the north side of the river. While South Edmonton has "Edmonton station" within its boundaries it reaps a benefit from the advertising which Edmonton has received, but when that town has a station of its own we will suffer by reason of a suburban name more than we do now and will not profit so much by the name "Edmonton" because we must have a name and an identity of our own.²³

Those arguing for incorporation were challenged by a number of citizens who had equally strong opinions against incorporation which were based largely on the cost of such an undertaking. One opponent, for example, pointed out that higher taxes would follow incorporation, taxes that "would more than counterbalance any good [incorporation] would do."²⁴ Other opponents of incorporation repeatedly pointed out that incorporation was premature and that it

would wreck the future for the community. It was suggested that a policy of "leaving well enough alone" was more suitable.²⁵

The incorporation debate continued unresolved until November 1898, when the Territorial Government intervened under section three of the North West Territories Village Ordinance.²⁶ This section permitted the Lieutenant-Governor to proclaim any unincorporated community a village and appoint an overseer to manage its affairs. Strathcona responded by calling the necessary public meeting in order to proceed with its incorporation as a town.

The success of the incorporation meetings held in November 1898 can be attributed directly to the intervention of the Commissioner of Public Works, who stated that "we took that course to force [Strathcona] to do something. . . ."²⁷ This intervention proved to be the catalyst necessary to resolve a situation which might have remained deadlocked for some time to come. Thus local government, far from being the product of local initiative, was thrust upon Strathcona. The opinions expressed at the incorporation meetings demonstrate that despite the existence of a well-developed sense of civic pride, a consensus on the part of Strathcona's businessmen in favour of the establishment of political institutions which could be useful in the achievement of broader economic goals was lacking. Even the town's first Mayor, Thomas Bennett, stated at the nomination meeting that in his opinion "incorporation should have been delayed a couple of years." The tone of his reported remarks, however, suggests that he wished to make the best of a decision that could not now be altered:

But since it had been practically forced on us it was necessary to face the situation. He did not believe in mushroom growth or sinking the town with heavy taxation. There were certain improvements exceedingly necessary: first, the business streets needed fixing up and sidewalks put in order; second, an efficient system of fire protection he deemed necessary; third, the sanitary condition of the town needs immediate attention. He thought a piece of land for a dump ground should be purchased and used. It was necessary to give the town a good appearance to strangers coming in. He considered the townsite of Strathcona second to none in natural advantages and he hoped it might be as successful as the man for whom it was named.²⁸

Eight years after Strathcona reluctantly incorporated as a town, it was incorporated as a city. True to form, this decision was initiated by a *Strathcona Plaindealer* editorial which pointed out that "the financial discretion of the ratepayers under the present charter is not as large as it should be."²⁹ This editorial plus a representation to Council by the Strathcona Board of Trade resulted in the creation of a committee to study the question. The committee produced a report which called for the introduction of the commission and ward systems

as well as the single tax. The report also noted that the City of Edmonton Charter of 1904 would serve as a useful model. The City Charter was, however, to have very little impact on the nature of municipal politics in Strathcona because the City Council was as much concerned about the cost of introducing the system as about improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the government. This concern reflected the issues raised in the incorporation debate of 1898, thus indicating that little had changed between 1898 and 1904.³⁰

The foregoing description and analysis of Strathcona's development has focused on the years between 1891 and 1902. During this period Strathcona enjoyed the unique position of being the head of steel for the only railway in the district. The completion of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway [EY&PR] in 1902 initiated a new era of railway development in the Edmonton region during which time Strathcona's favoured position was drastically altered. This 2.1 miles of track connected Edmonton with the C&ER at Strathcona (see Map 3). The construction of the line by Mackenzie and Mann was part of a larger strategy to gain control of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway and connect both lines at some future date with their Manitoba system. The CPR was, however, able to preserve its control over the C&ER as well as delay the installation of an interchange between the C&ER and the EY&PR.³¹ Mackenzie and Mann's control of the C&ER may have brought significant benefits to Strathcona in view of their intention of using the EY&P charter to build a line to the Pacific coast via the Yellowhead Pass. The continued control of the C&ER meant that the CPR would continue to be one of the decisive factors in Strathcona's future. As events were to show, any faith on Strathcona's part in the CPR's ability and interest to make it a great metropolitan centre was unjustified.

The events of this period served the purpose of establishing a very close working relationship between the Canadian Northern Railway and Edmonton. The integration of Edmonton's metropolitan growth with the development of this railway system was formalized by a terminal agreement negotiated in 1903. This was a three-party agreement which involved joint purchase of 68.88 acres of Hudson's Bay Reserve land by the City of Edmonton and the Canadian Northern for use as railway yards and station grounds.³² The agreement was endorsed by the Edmonton electorate through their favourable vote on By-law 237 which provided \$30,000 to the City administration for the purpose of acquiring all the property needed by the Canadian Northern for its right-of-way through the City. This agreement, which assured Edmonton of the benefits to be derived from railway construction, accelerated the shift to the north side.

Strathcona did not take an active role in the railway affairs of this



era until December 1904. Prior to 1904 its involvement was restricted to comments in the local press and an outline of railway developments past, present and future for Strathcona in the first promotional pamphlet of the Board of Trade. This pamphlet offered a somewhat optimistic view of Strathcona's position in relation to railway development:

We have the Calgary & Edmonton line and we have the Canadian Northern. The C.P.R. has recently acquired the C. & E. line and has decided to span the Saskatchewan River here with a high level bridge from high bank in Strathcona to high bank in Edmonton. They propose construction in the near future of a line from some point in Assiniboia on their main line in north-westerly direction to Strathcona which is bound to be the chief divisional point. The Grand Trunk Pacific surveys are but begun hence we cannot determine positively where their line will cross the Saskatchewan enroute to Peace River or to the Yellow Head Pass. All projections and the preliminary surveys now in progress show the crossing to be at Strathcona, which appears to possess the most feasible and practicable site. . . . All these railways promise completion within five years from this date.³³

This view of the future emphasized the Canadian Pacific's proposed high level bridge and the Grand Trunk Pacific's [GTP's] mainline which was anticipated to come through Strathcona. The Canadian Northern Railway was viewed as having already made a substantial contribution to Strathcona's growth through the construction of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway. This perspective reflects Strathcona's failure to appreciate the significant role the Canadian Northern was playing in promoting urban growth on the north side of the river. The key element in Strathcona's design for future metropolitan growth was therefore its belief that it was the best site for crossing the North Saskatchewan River. If the community could persuade the railways to cross at Strathcona, the problem of a limited hinterland would vanish.

In December 1904 the Strathcona Board of Trade convened a special meeting for the purpose of discussing the idea and developing a strategy in order to accomplish the goal. This meeting, which "was one of the most enthusiastic in the history of the organization," overwhelmingly endorsed the idea "that nothing would hasten the rapid development of the two towns more than a high level union railway bridge at this point over which all railways that are to converge here should cross the Saskatchewan." The strategy adopted by those attending the meeting "was to secure the co-operation of all the local forces, the Boards of Trade of both Edmonton and Strathcona, the municipal councils, the members of the Territorial Assembly and the members of parliament for both Edmonton and Strathcona."³⁴ The idea that Edmonton and Strathcona join together in order to promote the construction of a union railway bridge received a very lukewarm reception from the Edmonton Board of Trade. The basis for Edmonton's lack of interest was noted by Mr. J. R. Boyle,

who spoke very candidly in opposition to the bridge scheme. He said he failed to see wherein Edmonton could gain by it for the reason that she had already practically a cinch on the railways.

The Canadian Northern was going to cross at Fort Saskatchewan and come into Edmonton from the northeast. The G.T.P. was going to cross at Clover Bar and come in from the east. C.P.R. was bound to cross into Edmonton from the south over a high level bridge of their own construction and what more did Edmonton want? He thought they should let good enough alone.³⁵

The idea of a union bridge was also not greeted with any enthusiasm by the CPR. Mr. D. H. McKinnon reported, following his trip East, that the CPR company "are determined to build a high level bridge across the Saskatchewan at this point themselves, and not in company with either the Government or other railway corporations. They want to be as independent of other concerns as the railway commission will allow them to be."³⁶

Despite the fact that considerable evidence existed to suggest that the idea was not practical, Strathcona continued to be encouraged by McKinnon's statement that he had "the assurance of Mr. Mann that it is the intention of the Canadian Northern Co. to build into Strathcona from the east along the south side of the river this coming season."³⁷ Strathcona was also encouraged by their interview with Mr. Frank Morse, General Manager of the GTP, during his visit to Strathcona in March 1905. During the visit he "laid at rest any doubts there were in the minds of any that Strathcona would not be on the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific. He estimated that it was the Company's intention to begin construction at this point within two years."³⁸

Six months later the last prop supporting Strathcona's optimism was removed. In September 1905 the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway submitted a plan of its proposed route through Edmonton to the Department of Railways and Canals for approval. This route plan indicated that the mainline would cross the North Saskatchewan River at Clover Bar. The GTP had thus not accepted the idea of a union bridge for all three railways located at Strathcona. A number of factors were involved in the Grand Trunk Pacific's decision to choose this route. The first was that the engineering surveys carried out by the Company indicated that extra costs would be incurred in choosing a south side alternative. The extra costs derived from the need for additional trackage to avoid the high grades imposed by the Beaver Hills and the need to construct a bridge across the Mill Creek Ravine (see Maps 2 and 3). The second factor was the CPR's apparent reluctance to reach a decision regarding joint use of the proposed high level bridge.³⁹ A third factor contributing to the Grand Trunk Pacific's unwillingness to make any special effort on Strathcona's behalf was the fact that Strathcona had failed to make any bonus offers directly to the company. Edmonton, by contrast, had established a good working relationship with the company as early as 1903 when Charles Melville

Hays met the Edmonton Town Council in order to explain his plans for a transcontinental railway. This "good working relationship" included a cash bonus of \$100,000 and a twenty-year exemption from all municipal taxation on all land owned by the company.⁴⁰

Strathcona's immediate response to this situation was to request federal government intervention. Strathcona's point of view was placed before the government during a visit by the Minister of Railways and Canals in October 1905. A joint letter from the Strathcona Town Council and the Strathcona Board of Trade was also sent to the Minister. After outlining the various options available to the GTP, the letter noted that

to have Edmonton as our nearest station will hamper materially the residential and industrial interests of this town . . . owing to the heavy grades [which will increase] the distance, difficulty and expense of freight transportation between the business centre of this town and that of Edmonton. . . .

The letter also suggested "the possibility of arranging with the CPR Co. for running rights over the CPR high level bridge now definitely located at this point, thus obviating the necessity of a new bridge across the Saskatchewan."⁴¹

In response to this pressure, Ottawa requested the GTP to undertake additional surveys. The railway was not prepared, however, to cater to Strathcona's pride by fully complying with Ottawa's request. The Company responded in January 1906 by simply providing the federal government with letters from GTP engineers together with blueprints of the location and exploration surveys made by the Company through the territory in question. In the letter transmitting this information, Frank Morse, Vice-President and General Manager of the Company, noted that "owing to the topography of the country it will not be possible to maintain our grades and follow the line suggested."⁴² The Company therefore felt that an adequate amount of information on the area had been gathered and that further survey work was unnecessary.

Ottawa's response, when notified of this decision, makes it clear that the government was far from satisfied:

The Minister of Railways and Canals attaches some importance to [a] survey being made, as promised by you, to satisfy him and the Citizens of Strathcona either that a feasible line can or cannot be obtained on that route, and that until such a survey is made and the information is placed before the Government the route cannot be decided upon, as explained to you the Government is very desirous that the road should pass through Strathcona to Edmonton, if an equally favourable location both as regards distance, gradients, and curvature can be obtained. Permit me to suggest that the shortest and quickest way of disposing of this matter is to

at once proceed to carry out your promise of having a survey made of the route.⁴³

The GTP still did not act in what the government felt to be a proper manner, however, and eventually the government itself conducted a survey. Not surprisingly, this survey indicated that the GTP's original decision was a defensible one. A final decision approving a crossing at Clover Bar (see Map 2) was made on July 23, 1906. The reasons for the decision were stated as follows:

That, from the facts submitted it appears, in the first place, a line entering at Strathcona would not only entail very considerable cost of construction in excess of that by the Clover Bar route, but owing to the difficult configuration of the country, would render access to the railway yards at Edmonton impracticable, except by a long detour, passing the City and then returning, a system which would be absolutely destructive to the economical, convenient and expeditious handling of the traffic; and, consequently, inasmuch as this is a vital point in the successful operation of a railway, this feature must, in itself, be regarded as sufficient to take the Strathcona route out of consideration, as a feasible scheme.⁴⁴

In addition to appealing to Ottawa to protect its interests, Strathcona also made a belated attempt to influence the course of events by dealing directly with the GTP. On February 8, 1906, a letter was sent to the GTP offering it sixty acres. The GTP, however, indicated that its surveys were still in progress and that it was unable to make a commitment.⁴⁵ The activities of the Council proved to be a case of too little too late.

Strathcona's bitter resentment of the outcome of the dispute was expressed to the Laurier Government five days later. In the letter, George F. Downes, Secretary-Treasurer of the Town of Strathcona, reviewed the promise of the Federal Government "that this railway should enter via Strathcona, provided a suitable grade could be found... [and] that the matter of increased cost or slightly increased mileage was not material provided the grade was satisfactory." Downes then proceeded to question the integrity of the Federal Government:

In the face of the Minister's statements... and these facts are we to take that the word of a Minister of the Crown is of no moment; that the word of a man holding such an office is to be lightly used throughout the Dominion of Canada as a mere device for catching votes? If so, then we respectfully submit that your government must be sadly lacking in honest support when such means are used to delude an electorate.

The letter concluded by drawing attention to Strathcona's long history of support for the Liberal Party and requested intervention on the basis of this record.⁴⁶

The approval of the GTP's line through Edmonton reduced Strathcona's options for additional mainline construction down to one. The manner in which Strathcona dealt with the CPR was significantly different and was to meet with success. In dealing with this company, Strathcona was prepared to offer a bonus similar to other communities. Negotiations between the town and the CPR were initiated in 1903 and led by 1906 to an agreement through which the CPR obtained sufficient free land for its terminal facilities. In return, the CPR agreed to make "Strathcona their chief divisional point in Northern Alberta and to locate their terminals here for their northwestern line via Saskatoon and Wetaskiwin."⁴⁷ The construction program included a new twelve-stall roundhouse, coal bunkers, yard extensions and a new station. This agreement did not assist Strathcona in playing a significant role in the emerging railway system in the Edmonton region because the CPR did not undertake the construction of any branch lines north of the river at this time. This lack of branch-line construction solidified Strathcona's position on the southern frontier of the CPR's area of dominance in Alberta.

The net result of the construction programs of the Canadian Northern, GTP and CPR was that Strathcona's principal problem of limited hinterlands had not been solved. Its position in the region had in fact significantly deteriorated because of the growth of Edmonton and other urban communities such as Wetaskiwin and Camrose. Strathcona's economic stagnation as a metropolitan centre did not mean that economic growth had been stunted entirely. Growth, however, had been limited to the expansion of existing production capacities; new endeavours such as wholesaling had shown no increase.⁴⁸

During its twenty-one years as a separate community, Strathcona was thus a failure in terms of the achievement of its economic goals. It did, however, achieve one notable success as the home of the Provincial University. The Provincial Government's intention to create a university was announced during the first session of the first legislature of the Province of Alberta held in the Spring of 1906. The creation of a university for the Province of Alberta was largely the work of Alberta's first Premier, A. C. Rutherford, who also served as the Minister of Education and the M.L.A. from the constituency of Strathcona. The announcement by A. C. Rutherford in the Spring of 1906 that it was the intention of his government to create a university did not include a statement concerning location. Many communities, including Strathcona, considered themselves worthy of such an honour and duly made representations to the Premier. In a letter dated January 31, 1907, Mayor Mills of Strathcona pointed out to the Premier that "a short time ago the Council appointed a committee to

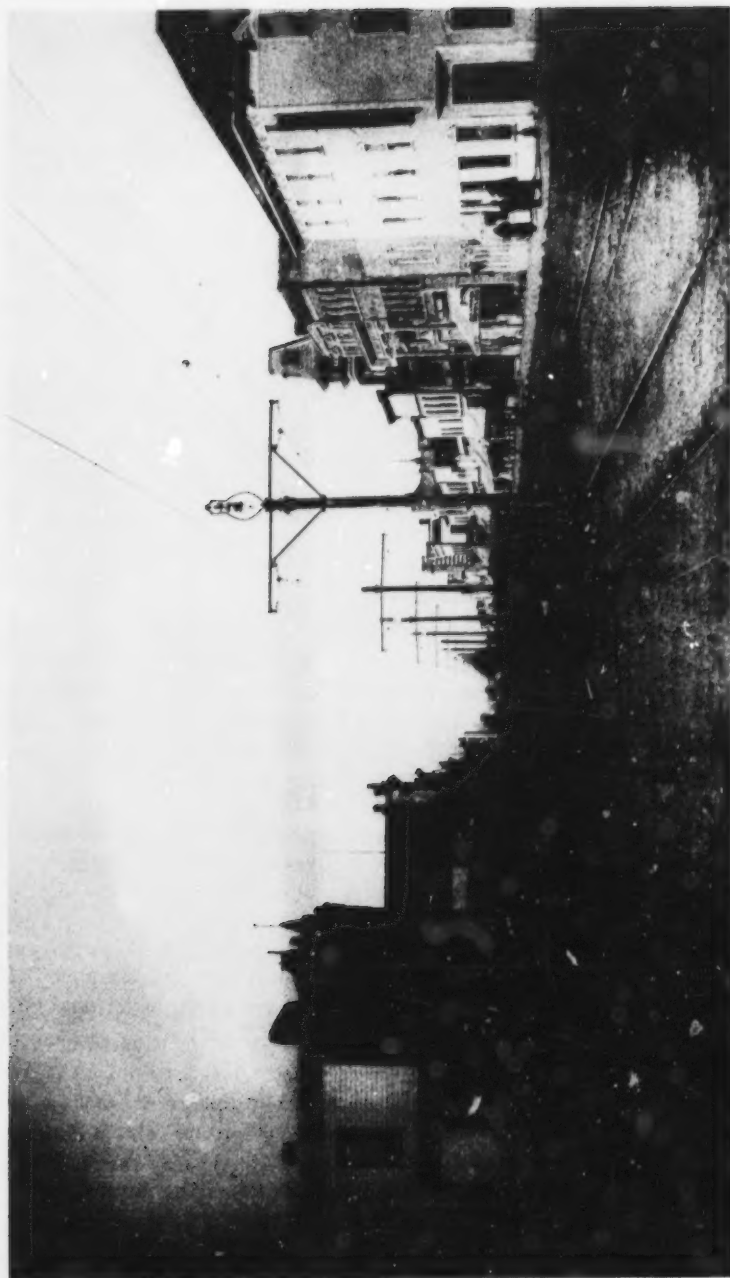
wait on your Government in connection with the proposed University site."⁴⁹ Some time prior to receiving the letter, however, Premier Rutherford had opened negotiations for the purchase of River Lot 5 of the Edmonton Settlement for use as a university site, thus ensuring that Strathcona's metropolitan interests would be served.⁵⁰

Even the *Edmonton Bulletin* was prepared to acknowledge that this minor victory of Strathcona was in the best interests of the Province:

So far as Edmonton is concerned, she is quite content to see her sister city secure the university, as in its location across the river it is not any farther removed from the capital than if in some outside location in this city. Strathcona is as near the geographical centre of the province as it is possible to locate this important institution, and besides it is in the centre of a district that will be densely populated in a few years, and which now contains a very large agricultural population, as shown by recent census. And the kind of agricultural population around Strathcona is the kind from which in other parts of Canada a large proportion of successful students have been drawn.⁵¹

Coincident with the decline in Strathcona's credibility as a potential metropolitan centre was an increasing interest on the part of citizens from both sides of the river in the possibility of the amalgamation of the two communities. The question of amalgamation was discussed as early as 1908 when the City of Edmonton sent a formal overture to Strathcona in this regard. Strathcona's reply indicated that any proposal for amalgamation would be premature at that time, but left the matter open for future discussion.⁵² In 1909 a Municipal Improvement League was established in Edmonton which had as one of its objectives the amalgamation of Edmonton and Strathcona. The efforts of the League were matched in Strathcona the same year by the circulation of a petition supporting amalgamation.⁵³ The Council dealt with the issue by arranging a "conference between the Council and the promoters of that petition [at which time] it was agreed that the matter should be allowed to rest for a year."⁵⁴ The fact that J. M. Douglas, President of the Board of Trade, was involved in this presentation indicates that even the Strathcona Board of Trade was prepared to abandon the goal of establishing Strathcona as an independent metropolitan centre.

By 1910 amalgamation became an election issue on both sides of the river. In November a second petition was circulated in Strathcona requesting the Council to "secure at the next session of the Provincial Legislature such legislation as will permit of this City being amalgamated with the City of Edmonton by an Order-in-Council at any time when terms are agreed upon."⁵⁵ When the petition was received by the City of Strathcona Council, it was referred to the



Courtesy of Glenbow-Alberta Institute

FIGURE III—STRATHCONA, 1910. Looking west down Whyte Avenue from C.P.R. Tracks.

Committee on Charter amendments. The report of this committee proposed that a two-thirds majority should be required in favour of amalgamation before any changes could become law, and that only resident ratepayers should be allowed to vote on it.

This action by the Council precipitated the creation of the Strathcona Ratepayers Association. At the founding meeting of the association, held in the offices of Arthur Davies, a central committee was chosen which, with ward committees, was to look after the general business of the organization. At the same meeting "candidates who [were] standing on the 'Progressive' ticket enunciated their policies, receiving the unanimous endorsement of the ratepayers present."⁵⁶ The progressives were those candidates prepared to support amalgamation under suitable terms. In addition to organizing themselves to fight the upcoming civic election on the issue of amalgamation, the association was also successful in preventing the Council from obtaining amendments to the City Charter along the lines suggested by the Committee on Charter Amendments.

Election day 1910 proved to be a complete triumph for the progressives, who joined other supporters already on Council such as J. P. Tipton. The new council shortly after taking office initiated the necessary steps towards amalgamation. On January 10, 1911, a committee was established to meet with the City of Edmonton to draft an agreement. The agreement negotiated by this committee provided for the full participation of Strathcona in the affairs of "Greater Edmonton."

The terms of the agreement were placed before the ratepayers of Strathcona as By-law 417. The by-law provided for a south side office and improved transportation links between the two communities. On September 26, 1911, a total of 518 votes were cast for the by-law while 178 votes were cast against. The necessary amendments were made to the Edmonton Charter which resulted in the amalgamation of Edmonton and Strathcona on February 1, 1912.

Amalgamation was thus the final chapter in the history of the idea that Strathcona was a great metropolitan centre. Strathcona's enthusiasm for the union of the twin cities demonstrates that its existence as a separate city was more apparent than real. It was a city which existed through boosterism and thus it stands as a monument to the spirit of the Canadian West in the years before the First World War. The rhetoric of the boosters which stressed hope and faith in Strathcona's "natural advantages" as a potential basis for metropolitan growth was contradicted by the reality of its limited opportunities for such development. These limited opportunities combined with the lack of an aggressive railway patron and a cohesive commercial elite to provide effective leadership produced a sequence of events which

moved Strathcona inevitably towards amalgamation. Between 1891 and 1912 Strathcona was in reality being integrated into an urban system dominated by Edmonton.

The failure of Strathcona's citizens to support aggressively the idea of Strathcona as a separate metropolitan centre was matched by the failure of the boosters to appreciate the need for an active program to attract investment and railways rather than rely on its "natural advantages." In contrast to Edmonton, Strathcona was not as willing to support financially its dreams for the future.

The boosters also failed to develop a realistic concept of Strathcona's role as a metropolitan centre. The boosters had originally envisaged the complete disappearance of Edmonton as a force in the region but eventually had to acknowledge their mistake. The economic role of Strathcona as seen by the boosters, however, continued to be that of "entrepôt of the north." Strathcona boosters thus failed to define Strathcona in such a way as to give it a unique role in the region—a role distinct and different from that of Edmonton.

Despite Strathcona's ultimate failure to develop the social and economic attributes of a metropolitan centre, an identifiable community did emerge in the region. It was, however, a community inadequately prepared to protect its own identity and interests. This historical judgment does not negate the fact that in the early 1890s Strathcona did present a real threat to Edmonton's position. Indeed, the threat to Edmonton was sufficient to strengthen the embryonic elements of metropolitan urban growth then developing on the north side of the river. The Calgary and Edmonton Railway's objective of developing a metropolitan centre at its northern terminus did prove to be successful. This development, however, took place on the north side of the river. The interest of Strathcona in amalgamation derived from its desire to participate in this development. Strathcona could not beat Edmonton; therefore, it decided to join it.

Strathcona was the outgrowth of a particular set of circumstances which represented a temporary phase in the development of the region. These circumstances produced great expectations typical of many urban centres in the Canadian West during the period. Strathcona's basic mistake was its failure to recognize the fragile nature of the circumstances that were necessary for sustained urban growth and the need for a comprehensive and sustained strategy to achieve this result.

NOTES

¹ For the purpose of this paper, the name Strathcona has been adopted to cover the entire period from 1891 to 1912.

² *Statutes of Canada*, 53 Vic., Cap. 84, assented to 24 April 1890.

³ PAC, "Records of the Dominion Immigration Branch," Record Group 76, Vol. 24, File 531, Nanton to Carling, 18 September 1891.

- ⁴ PAC, "Records of the RCMP," Record Group 18, A1, Vol. 68, File 492, Anderson to Burgess, 3 May 1892.
- ⁵ Considerable documentation on this incident is to be found in the June 20, 25 and 30 issues of the *Edmonton Bulletin* as well as in the Records of the RCMP. A popular account of Edmonton's colourful defence of its metropolitan interests is to be found in Tony Cashman, *The Best Edmonton Stories* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1976), pp. 90-92.
- ⁶ In August 1898, Mackenzie and Mann purchased control of the Edmonton-based Edmonton District Railway Company, which was renamed the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway Company the following year. They initiated construction of 2.1 miles of track connecting Edmonton and Strathcona and also negotiated an extension of the Company's Charter. A fuller outline of their activities during this period will be provided in the latter part of this paper.
- ⁷ PAC, Shaughnessy Letter Book 31, p. 89, Shaughnessy to Whyte, 4 May 1892.
- ⁸ The name *Strathcona Plaindealer* was adopted in 1900, prior to which it had been published under the names *South Edmonton News* (1894-1896) and *Alberta Plaindealer* (1896-1900).
- ⁹ *South Edmonton News*, 8 November 1894.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 7 November 1895.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 8 November 1894.
- ¹² A possible explanation for this lack of involvement is to be found in the fact that these businessmen had economic interests on both sides of the river.
- ¹³ *Strathcona: The Railway Town and Manufacturing Centre for Northern Alberta* (Strathcona: Strathcona Board of Trade, 1903), p. 18. Other publications by this organization include *Strathcona, Alberta, 1906*; *Strathcona: The Railway, Industrial, Educational Centre of the Province, 1910*; and *Strathcona: The University City of Alberta, 1911*.
- ¹⁴ *South Edmonton News*, 7 February 1895.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 8 November 1895.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 7 November 1895.
- ¹⁷ For a detailed discussion of these firms see John Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona, 1891-1912," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1978), Chapter Four.
- ¹⁸ A second company involved in the timber business was the Edmonton Lumber Company, established in 1905. There were, as well, other companies that used the products of the timber firms, such as door and sash factories. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- ¹⁹ For a complete list see *ibid.*, Chapter Four.
- ²⁰ *Edmonton Bulletin*, 5 September 1891.
- ²¹ The importance of municipal incorporation as a tool for promoting growth has been discussed in Alan F. J. Artibise, "Boosterism and the Development of Prairie Cities, 1871-1913," in this volume.
- ²² *South Edmonton News*, 11 July 1895.
- ²³ *Alberta Plaindealer*, 8 June 1898.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 16 December 1897.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 23 December 1897.
- ²⁶ North West Territories Consolidated Ordinances 1898, Cap. 72, "An Ordinance respecting Villages," Section 3.
- ²⁷ *Alberta Plaindealer*, 16 December 1898.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 16 June 1899.
- ²⁹ *Strathcona Plaindealer*, 7 September 1906.
- ³⁰ For a more detailed discussion of Strathcona's City Charter see John Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona, 1891-1912," Chapter Three.
- ³¹ For a discussion of Mackenzie and Mann's attempt to gain control of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway and their operation of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway see T. D. Regehr, *The Canadian Northern Railway: Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies, 1895-1918* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976), pp. 105-67.
- ³² *Edmonton Bulletin*, 5 March 1903.
- ³³ *Strathcona: The Railway Town and Manufacturing Centre of Northern Alberta*, p. 19.
- ³⁴ *Strathcona Plaindealer*, 16 December 1904.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 23 December 1904.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, 10 February 1905.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸ *Strathcona Plaindealer*, 24 March 1905.
- ³⁹ PAC, "Records of the Canadian National Railways," Record Group 43, A2(a), Vol. 166, File 4402, Hays to Schreiber, 18 January 1906.
- ⁴⁰ City of Edmonton, By-law No. 4.
- ⁴¹ PAC, "Records of the Canadian National Railways," Davies and McDonald to Emmerson, [15] November 1905. Strathcona's M.P., Peter Talbot, and M.L.A., A. C. Rutherford, also wrote letters to Prime Minister Laurier supporting federal intervention. See PAC, Laurier Papers, P. 103276, Talbot to Laurier, 20 November 1905; and *ibid.*, P. 103584, Rutherford to Laurier, 23 November 1905.

- ⁴² PAC, "Records of the Canadian National Railways," Morse to Schreiber, 4 January 1906.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, Schreiber to Morse, 5 January 1906.
- ⁴⁴ PAC, "Records of the Canadian National Railways," Order in Council dated 23 July 1906.
- ⁴⁵ City of Edmonton Archives, Record Group 100.1.
- ⁴⁶ PAC, "Records of the Canadian National Railways," Downes to Laurier, 28 July 1906.
- ⁴⁷ *Strathcona Plaindealer*, 1 June 1906.
- ⁴⁸ The 1911 *Henderson's Directory* for the twin cities under the wholesale categories of butchers, coal dealers, confectioners, dry goods, grocers and hardware and tools listed twenty-four for Edmonton compared to one for Strathcona.
- ⁴⁹ University of Alberta Archives, Rutherford Papers, Mills to Rutherford, 31 January 1907.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ *Edmonton Bulletin*, 9 April 1907.
- ⁵² *Alberta Plaindealer*, 15 September 1908.
- ⁵³ *Edmonton Bulletin*, 7 July 1909.
- ⁵⁴ *Strathcona Plaindealer*, 25 November 1910.
- ⁵⁵ City of Edmonton Archives, Griesbach Papers; and *Strathcona Plaindealer*, 8 November 1910.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 29 November 1910.

11. THE MAKING OF A BOOSTER: WESLEY FLETCHER ORR AND NINETEENTH CENTURY CALGARY

MAX FORAN

Rupert's Land became part of Canada with Confederation. The Canadian Pacific Railway, Marquis wheat, and cattle transformed Sir George Simpson's former fur-trading empire into "the last best West." Settlers began arriving haphazardly in the 1880s, and by 1900 the trickle had become a stream which was to burst its banks before stabilizing with the depression of 1913-14. Within the space of a single generation the population of the North-West Territories increased from 56,486 to 867,095. In both the vanguard and wake of the pioneer farmers strode the effervescent entrepreneurs and promoters. Fortunes were made in those vital years as cattle kings, railway tycoons, and real estate speculators rose to prominence. Yet, as was the case with the earlier fur trader and prospector, financial success came to few. Mackenzie and Mann, for example, burst like a meteor to flame fiercely before dying in the oblivion of the Canadian Northern Arbitration Board. Other lesser figures struggled to transform their dreams into material success and failed. Wesley Fletcher Orr belonged to this latter group. Possessed of boundless energy, imagination, foresight and experience, Orr held ambitions matched only by his faith in the future of western Canada. In many ways his role in Calgary's early civic governments epitomized the booster mentality in a practical situation. Yet he was denied the success he sought so assiduously. For while ambition and zeal blurred too easily into self-delusion, his boosterism betrayed a mentality that resembled more the dreamer than the entrepreneur of his self-image.

The Pre-Calgary Years, 1831-1885

Wesley Fletcher Orr was born at La Chute on March 3, 1831. His grandfather, James Orr—and probably others of the Orr Clan¹—had left Ireland with his family some twenty years earlier. Not long after his arrival in Lower Canada, James Orr died unexpectedly at La Source, and thus had had little chance to assess the comparative advantage of Canada over the wretched fields of County Down which he had so recently forsaken. Samuel, his son, turned away from the farming life

begun by his father. He married Jane Hicks, an Irish-born teenager, and settled at La Chute to raise his eight children.² Samuel Orr became a respected member in the predominantly English-speaking community, serving as a wholesale merchant and a loyal government servant. Indeed, Orr's house was used as an armory where loyal volunteers fought off rebels in the uprising of 1837. Samuel Orr outlived the Union of the Canadas, and John A. Macdonald's first federal administration before he died of encephalitis in 1875.

Wesley Orr thus grew up in fairly comfortable surroundings, securely insulated against rampant liberalism, and cemented to Protestantism by close family ties. He received an adequate education, being sent away to Montreal for advanced schooling at St. Laurent College.³ There Orr developed his natural love of reading and writing, and became fluent in French, a facility he was always to value highly.⁴ At this early age Orr showed the keen interest in newspaper articles that provided the inspiration for many promotion schemes. The articles which he took great care to clip and file often dealt with universal remedies for social problems and revealed both his youthful curiosity and inveterate optimism.⁵

The influence of Protestantism and more specifically Canadian Methodism permeated the Orr household. The sixth son, born in 1843, bore the name of Egerton Ryerson Orr. The young Wesley Orr displayed the intensity of feeling characteristic of Protestantism in pre-Confederation Canada. Predictably he scorned what seemed to him the pomp and superstitious ignorance of the Roman Catholic Church,⁶ and devoted his spare time to reading biographies of "Martyrs of Truth" like John Hus. On his nineteenth birthday Orr lamented that he "had done little for the cause of God,"⁷ and almost every diary entry in 1849-50 contained reference to his role as a servant of the Lord. Specifically Orr's interest in religion led him to join the temperance movement in 1853, to write his first article to a newspaper on spirit rapping,⁸ and to officiate in public for the first time by leading prayer meetings.⁹ More generally, however, it was this evangelical zeal nurtured under the auspices of religion which was later to redefine itself in the dedication Orr brought to his promotional schemes.

Upon his return from St. Laurent, Orr assisted his father travelling to Montreal to buy goods for sale in La Chute. Samuel Orr was also secretary treasurer for the Municipality School Commissioners, and young Wesley represented his father at meetings, and handled much of the paper work. The proceduralized order of the business meeting appealed to his organized mind. Mandates for action were hammered out in debate with the will of the most articulate usually holding sway. In 1854, while still at La Chute, Orr became an agent for the Mutual Fire Insurance Company of the county. This

initial foray into business began a pattern which was to be often repeated. Writing of his first selling venture in the Eastern Settlements, Orr noted that he "did not get any to insure."¹⁰ But the time was coming for the Orr boys to leave the security of home, and in the middle of 1854, Wesley and brother James left for Hamilton.

Wesley Orr's first job in Hamilton lasted less than a week. An assistant to a food retailer was not his idea of opportunity, particularly when he saw better prospects in the manufacturing business with his uncle. He arranged for the more tractable James to take his place in the food store and entered the somewhat esoteric business of manufacturing Saleratus.¹¹ Sales were not brisk, and though Orr soon learned the manufacturing aspect of the business, he had little time to acquaint himself with the intricacies of the elusive market. Seven months later the business died, and with it Orr's enthusiasm for both Saleratus and Hamilton.¹² By this time he had become interested in the cattle trade, and like many Canadians of the time he left his native land in search of prosperity in the United States.

In later years Orr was fond of referring to himself as the oldest cowpoke in Calgary.¹³ His interest in cattle took him from Texas to Chicago, New York, and Albany, and earned for him the soubriquet "Little Canada."¹⁴ The year 1858 saw Orr buying stock in Chicago for sale in Canada. Profits were meagre.¹⁵ "No chance of speculation of any kind,"¹⁶ he lamented in a now familiar vein. Often he could not go to church on the Sabbath for lack of suitable clothes. Orr's interest in cattle in the 1850s was interspersed with a short-lived partnership in a milling concern, as well as a three months stint teaching school in a small community about sixty miles down river from St. Paul. By late 1858 Orr was back in Canada where he acquired a lease on a candle-making factory. The story here was the same. His only sale a week before Christmas was one box of candles.¹⁷

Little is known of Orr's business ventures between 1860 and 1883 when he came to Calgary. No evidence is available, but Orr later referred to his extensive experience in the lumber business. In 1875 he was managing two general stores somewhere in Ontario, and in 1875 he secured a position as Inspector for Ontario in the North of Scotland Mortgage Company. This position brought him into contact with bankers and law firms, as well as with the major financial houses of Great Britain. The connections Orr made during his five years with the mortgage company provided him with the real or imagined liaisons which he was to utilize extensively the rest of his life.

The reasons for Orr's limited success in business remain conjectural. Probably his gadfly approach allowed him insufficient time either to gain experience or to wait for more favourable economic circumstances. Both his innate conservatism and his limited financial



Courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta

FIGURE 1—A VIEW OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY POST on the east side of the Elbow River, c. 1884. Orr's land was to the east and south of this post and was originally acquired from an ex-employee of the company, who had squatted there in the late 1870s—with the permission of the resident factor.

resources prevented him from adapting to the vagaries of the market place. His main success came when he could negate his conservatism or paucity of resources by acting as an agent, as his work with the North of Scotland Mortgage Company and as lumber manager would appear to indicate.

Wesley Orr was a staunch Conservative. He used to relate proudly how he "scoured bolts, burnished bayonets, cleaned . . . muskets and made cartridges" in the rebellion of 1837, adding that thereafter he had "never let up serving the government."¹⁸ This residue of toryism led him to uphold the anti-Confederation cause when he threw his support behind John Sandfield Macdonald. When the battle was lost and Macdonald's energies were channeled into the Premiership of Ontario, Orr was suitably rewarded by being appointed Coroner for Wentworth and Captain of the First Military District of North Wentworth.¹⁹ By the 1870s Orr's federal alignments were solidly Conservative, and he became reasonably well known in Ontario Conservative circles. Orr's political experiences had two ramifications. First, he was able to cultivate politically influential figures. It was D'Alton McCarthy who advised him to buy land in advance of the Canadian Pacific Railway.²⁰ The Honourable Thomas White, who became Minister of the Interior in 1885, was a boyhood friend of Orr's—they both attended St. Laurent College—and Orr was his campaign worker, as well as a frequent contributor to the *Hamilton Spectator*, a journal run by White's brother Richard. Second, Orr's experience and observation ingrained in him the concept that the Party helps its own. Being a Conservative involved more than a political creed. It was an elitist club where members of otherwise lowly stature who displayed filial loyalty and energy would never be forsaken.²¹ As a club member, Orr became a firm believer in the merits of the lobby and the rights of political gratuity.

It was probably in the 1870s that Orr began utilizing the press as a sounding board for his diversified schemes of general development. He possessed a pleasing writing style and brought the force of reasoned analysis to the many articles and letters which he contributed to sundry magazines and journals. He subscribed to many periodicals from which he gained promotional ideas and statistics. He probably learned a good deal about the newspaper business, for he was able to assume the editorship of the *Calgary Herald* in 1888. His interest in journalism also helped acquaint him with various newspaper men in Ontario. One of these, C. H. Mackintosh, Editor of the *Ottawa Daily Citizen* (1874-77), became Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories in 1893.²² When Orr came to Calgary he kept up his subscriptions to eastern Canadian, British, and American journals. He was therefore able to preserve his publishing contacts and to maintain access to sources of promotional possibilities.

Orr was prone to self-delusion. He attributed failure to factors beyond his control, and on more than one occasion he felt that rival interests had sabotaged his efforts. Orr definitely felt that he possessed the foresight necessary to entrepreneurial achievements. Self-delusion enhanced this opinion. He saw past "triumphs" as proof of his vision, and made it a point to acquaint investors with this information in the 1890s. For example, he took full credit for formulating the National Policy through the *Hamilton Spectator* long before John A. Macdonald used it to political advantage.²³ He also stated that he had framed the federal government's lumber export policy implemented in 1867. Orr credited himself with single-handedly cementing the solidarity of the North of Scotland Mortgage Company in Ontario.²⁴ He also maintained that he pioneered the phosphate industry in Canada through his articles, and that the specimens of stone he collected from the wilds of the Ottawa Valley led to one of the biggest export businesses in Canada.²⁵

In 1863 Wesley Orr married a girl some fifteen years his junior. Little is known of Priscilla Orr except what is contained in Orr's letters to his two married daughters in the last years of his life. Apparently Priscilla did not share her husband's enthusiasm for frontier life. In spite of his pleas she refused to accompany him and seven-year-old son, Lorne, to Calgary. There was an element of pathos in Orr's condemnation of his wife's behaviour. Behind his outraged feelings, and the overtones of self-pity, ran the bewildered strain of a middle-aged man left to raise a young son alone.²⁶ As the years went by and the chances of Priscilla's return dimmed, Orr turned more single-mindedly to his schemes. They became more varied, and as they dissolved into fantasies, the past became filled with thwarted victories for which others wore the laurels.

In 1881 the revised plans of "The Syndicate" shifted the route of the proposed transcontinental railroad south through Kicking Horse Pass. Siding No. 20, or more specifically Calgary settlement, was at the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers where a North-West Mounted Police fort (Fort Calgary) held surveillance over the surrounding Blackfoot country. Beside the fort stood the trading post operated by the I. G. Baker Company from Montana,²⁷ and across the Elbow River was the Hudson's Bay Company and a handful of settlers and ex-employees whose claims to land were sanctioned by the resident factor.²⁸ Orr shared the speculative interest which followed the railroad across the prairies, and in the early 1880s he was advised by knowledgeable Conservatives to acquire land at Calgary. Specific reference was made to Section 14, which in 1882 held the nucleus of settlement.²⁹ In 1883 Orr and a partner entered negotiations with a resident squatter to purchase the southwest quarter of Section 14 for

\$10,000. In making this investment Orr irrevocably committed himself. Confident that a minimum profit of \$100,000 awaited him, he all but exhausted his financial resources, enlisted the pecuniary aid of two brothers, and forfeited his lumber interests in Ontario.³⁰

Orr applied to the federal government for a patent allowing him to subdivide the land for sale as town lots. Two years elapsed before the patent was issued, and Orr feared that his lifetime opportunity was slipping away. According to the terms of the contract, the CPR was entitled to odd-numbered sections along the right of way. When the rails reached the east bank of the Elbow River in August 1883, the entourage of merchants and prospective businessmen found no clear title to the land occupied on Section 14.³¹ The railway company exacerbated matters further by following policy and locating its station on Section 15 farther west. Taking advantage of the CPR's generous terms of sale for lots purchased on Section 15, most residents skidded their dwellings across the frozen Elbow River to relocate around the railway station.³² Orr's first reaction was an attempt to delay town incorporation until the issuance of his patent. In this he was unsuccessful, and when Calgary was incorporated in November 1884 Orr's property dangled in speculative limbo. It was sufficiently peripheral to preclude ready competition with the CPR for prospective settlers. Yet it was close enough to be a crucial factor in a consequent eastward expansion of the town.

Orr blamed government officials for making issuance of his patent contingent upon "blood money" payments. He maintained that while he "greased palms" as was customary, he could not pay the \$3,000 demanded of him by H. H. Smith, Commissioner of Dominion Lands and Chairman of the Land Board in Winnipeg.³³ Whatever the credibility of Orr's statements, it is probable that the dubious nature of his purchase was a delaying factor in the issuance of patent. He had purchased the land from a squatter whose original claim was contested by the Hudson's Bay Company. Also, only a major reversal of policy would have resulted in the CPR locating its townsite on an even-numbered section. Orr erred in believing that his quarter section would be central in the location of Calgary's townsite. The "fortune" that was denied him became more real in the indignant rhetoric which Orr later levelled at the Party that had betrayed him.³⁴

Orr was not the type of man to give up his lifetime chance so easily. Ontario was no place for a man whose sole asset was more than two thousand miles westward. The Northwest held unbounded opportunities, and Calgary would surely grow, particularly with astute, enterprising men guiding its destiny. And so in the summer of 1886, Wesley Orr arrived in Calgary with his young son to take up permanent residence and attempt to salvage the remains of his sinking investments.

The Calgary Years, 1886-1898

When Orr arrived in Calgary he was fifty-five years of age and most certainly one of the town's oldest residents. He possessed only a small capital base but a wealth of experience to show for his long efforts to make good in the business world. Over the years his visionary instincts had been muted by a conservatism which had led him to follow the lead of others in practical affairs. When he entered Council in 1888 it was solely to protect his investments³⁵ Thus almost by accident Orr came to fill a role ideally suited to his special abilities. The force of institutional authority at last provided the opportunity to separate the visionary from the conservative.

Never the most altruistic of men, Orr once maintained that there were few individuals in Calgary who had any idea of "laying the foundations broad and deep of a great commercial centre."³⁶ Certainly it was true that the men who occupied positions in Calgary's early civic governments often substituted either cavalier enthusiasm or undue caution for expertise.³⁷ In the years 1888-1897 Wesley Orr's direct involvement in local government provided Calgary with its first taste of civic leadership, as he inspired every move in Council to enhance Calgary's position as a commercial centre. His influence was reflected in the early establishment of electric light, water and sewerage services, the erection of a public hospital, the acquisition of the Bow River islands for recreational purposes, and the step taken to incorporate Calgary as the first city in the North-West Territories in 1893-94.

Unlike his younger companions on Council, Orr had no full-time business and he was able to devote his energies to his civic duties. Diary entries reveal his heavy involvement in street grading, sidewalk laying or sewerage construction.³⁸ He had no permanent employment beyond acting as independent agent in various financial ventures.³⁹ As editor of the *Herald* in the late 1880s Orr found his steadiest employment and a communicative channel to promote his diversified schemes for Calgary's progress. Freedom from business commitments allowed him frequent visits to Ottawa, where his acquaintance with senior politicians worked to his advantage. For example, his mission to the capital in 1894 was considered crucial in gaining a healthy federal grant enabling the construction of a general hospital. The following typical extract from his diary in 1894 reveals his heavy commitment to civic matters:

March 29, 1894. I attended meeting of Irrigation League at 10 a.m. and at 4 p.m. for business. I went out with W. H. Cushing at 2 p.m. to see places that might do for hospital either on Stephen Avenue East also east of Elbow. I attended three committee meetings from 7-10 p.m.⁴⁰

As a champion on Council of east Calgary interests, Orr set



FIGURE II—CALGARY TOWN HALL as it looked during Orr's tenure as mayor.

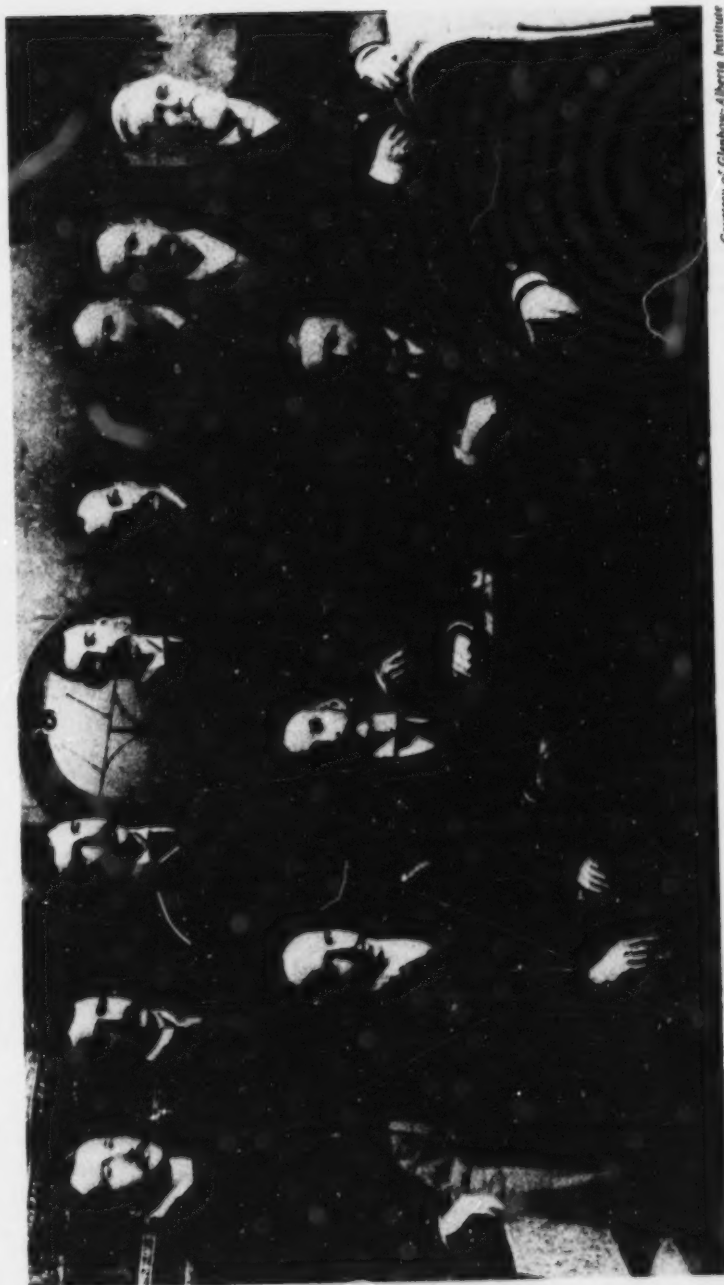
Courtesy of Glenbow-Alberta Institute

policies which had major implications for Calgary's spatial growth. One could argue that the present location of an east Calgary industrial base had its origins in Orr's industry-bonusing proposals.⁴¹ As Calgary's commercial and residential expansion continued westward, the east Calgary property holders, spearheaded by Orr on Council, concentrated on securing industrial location on their lands.⁴² In 1890 Orr, together with a group of east Calgary land owners, negotiated with the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company to have the proposed junction with the CPR located on their land. They entertained hopes that a station and town would follow.⁴³ They secured the junction but not the station or the town, and with the failure of this venture, Orr's hopes of realizing major gains from his investment dimmed. When he became mayor in 1894 and was in a position to wield more direct influence in town affairs, his schemes for district development had largely replaced his original plans for personal aggrandizement.

Wesley Orr was instrumental in throwing civic support behind the move led by William Pearce, Dominion Superintendent of Lands and Mines, to bring irrigation to southern Alberta. As early as 1892 Orr moved a resolution in Council endorsing an appeal to the federal government.⁴⁴ He was also a founding member of the Irrigation League which became actively engaged in co-ordinating district agitation. He was prominent in organizing the first Irrigation Convention held in the West from March 7-10, 1894.⁴⁵ When the enabling legislation was passed in 1894 (The North-West Irrigation Act), the newly-formed Calgary Irrigation Company found the City to be one of its first customers. With characteristic candor, Orr noted to a business correspondent that, while he could not honorably claim a commission for selling the City \$40,000 worth of irrigation, he would be interested in selling securities elsewhere if any irrigation company desired his services.⁴⁶

In the years before the population-settlement boom, the small towns of western Canada competed for permanent capital-inducing industries. For example, Calgary continually wooed the CPR for its anticipated repair shops. In this respect it is probable that the reputation Calgary gained for being a loyal CPR town was linked as much with self-interest as it was with gratitude towards its paternal mentor. In any case Orr played this ambivalent role as well as any, while he was undoubtedly the driving force behind the town's intensive efforts to gain a Dominion Experimental Farm, a sanatorium, and the Imperial Remount.

Orr revealed his originality of mind in a letter to the Hon. John Carling, the Minister of Agriculture. Writing in 1892 Orr restated the very arguments used to decry Calgary's suitability as a site for an



Courtesy of Glenbow-Alberta Institute

FIGURE III.—CALGARY TOWN COUNCIL as it was when city status was achieved in August 1893. Wesley Orr is on the far right. When Orr became mayor in 1894 he headed up the first Council to be elected from the new city.

Experimental Farm. He maintained that an area with such variations in temperature, and crop uncertainty, but with undeniable crop potential warranted an Experimental Farm which by definition had to concern itself with the future.⁴⁷ Similarly he used the unique nature of Calgary's climate when lobbying for the Dominion Government's proposed sanatorium for consumptives. He wrote the subsequent promotional pamphlet, *Calgary, The Denver of Canada* (1895), and was chairman of the special committee struck to present the town's case to the federal government. Orr's boosterism was even more evident in his personal campaign to persuade a diffident British Government to establish a remount for cavalry horses in the Calgary district. Interest in such an establishment dated from 1886 when a group of British officers visited the North-West Territories with a view to assessing western Canada's potential for raising hardy horses. Though the British were hardly enthusiastic, the scheme retained high promise for local boosters, and in 1892 a visit to Calgary by Sir John Ross, Commander of the British Forces in Canada, re-activated local agitation.⁴⁸ Maintaining that the remount's establishment would mean over \$1 million annually in revenue to Calgary, Council appointed a special committee to agitate on the town's behalf. As chairman of this committee, Orr was in correspondence with a wide range of individuals including William Ewart Gladstone, Lord Rosebery, Lord Wyndham, Members of the British House of Commons, and Canadian Government officials in Great Britain, as well as with various military journals.⁴⁹ In addition petitions were forwarded to the Governor-General, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, and the Minister of the Interior.

If effectiveness is measured in terms of goal achievement, Orr failed. The decision-making focus was far removed from him and Calgary, and the institutions did not materialize as envisaged. Yet Orr's efforts on behalf of Calgary showed the liaison between booster and local government to good advantage. As a public spokesman with financial backing, Orr was able to combine his remarkable energy with the force of institutional authority. His arguments were persuasive, reasoned and varied. He utilized the press, promotional literature, and private correspondence, and he prevailed upon real or imagined acquaintances in high public places. Most important he was able to convert his own enthusiasm into a public consensus, for without him Calgary's corporate voice was but a whisper.

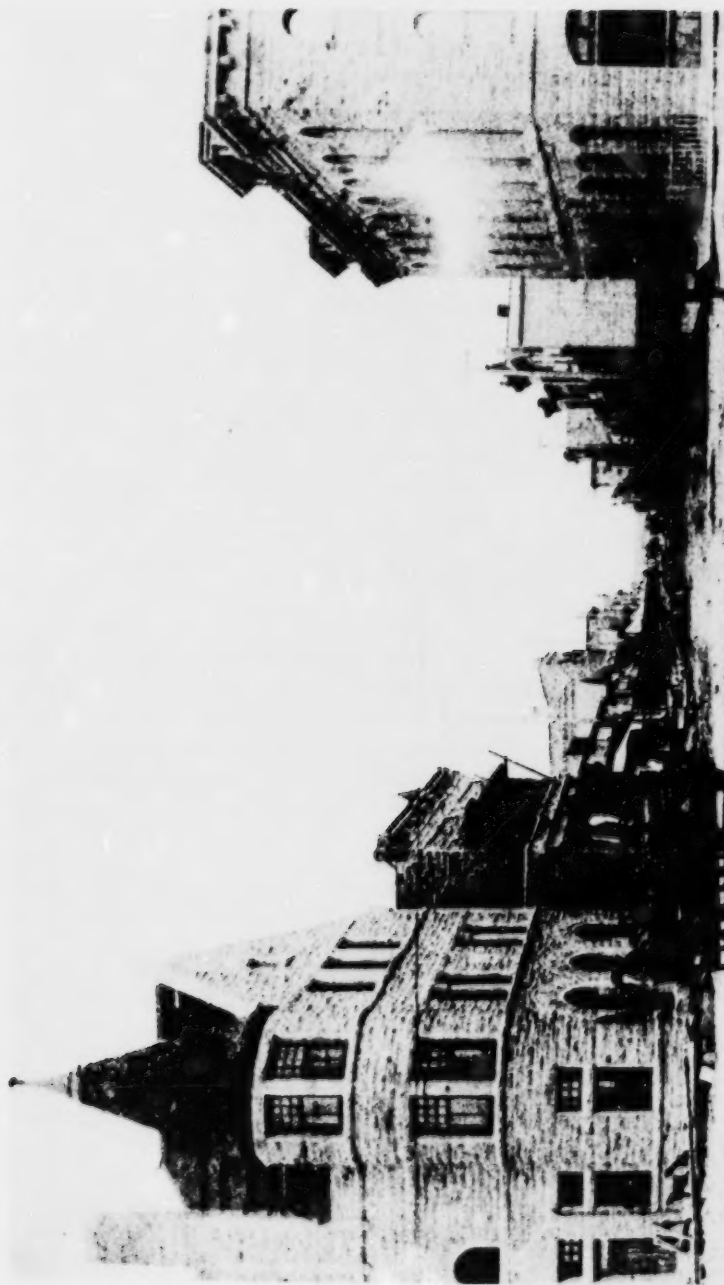
Orr found his greatest challenge in the field of railway promotion where shadowy liaisons and paper promises concealed the attraction of instant wealth. His interest in railways probably dated from 1881 when he publicly advocated the construction of a branch line to include his home town of Barrie.⁵⁰ In any case by 1890, as his hopes of realizing

vast profits from his land diminished, he turned to railway promotion as the best means of bettering himself and his district.

Never a dreamer of minor proportions, Orr envisaged a network of railways in the Northwest, focusing on Calgary and rivaling the CPR in magnitude. His inveterate optimism led him to believe that, given Ottawa's railway land-grant policy, all he had to do was convince British financial agents of the unbounded future of western Canada. For in true contemporary fashion, born of an era when optimism and railways were synonymous, Orr believed that instant rewards awaited any individual who had the imagination and perseverance to set the wheels in motion. The following extract from a confidential letter to C. H. Mackintosh, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, respecting a branch line in Manitoba is typical and informative of Orr's mentality and approach:

I have about made up my mind and my London friends agree with me to ask parliament for a new charter direct from Brandon and the Northern Pacific. I am anxious to make this connection in some way as it forms part of my plans for a network of railways in the North-West. My London friends say that there never has been a more favourable time for placing legitimate Canadian schemes than the present. The only cloud in the sky is the possibility of eastern complications.⁵¹

In 1894 Orr, together with five other local businessmen, formed the Alberta Southern Railway Company, and secured a charter to build a road from Calgary to the international boundary. Orr hoped that this line would link up with J. J. Hill's Great Northern to provide access to the lucrative United States markets. Orr was also active in promoting the Rocky Mountain Railway Company. This company, formed also by Calgarians, was to tap the coal fields of the mountains while serving as a colonization road. Orr had plans that the coal brought out by this railway would provide an answer to United States fuel needs via his own southern Alberta line.⁵² Orr was interested in having English capitalists buy out the financially beleaguered Great North-West Central Railway Company. Formed in 1885, and one of the smallest to receive a federal land grant, this company was to lay rails from Brandon through Battleford to the Rocky Mountains. Orr also wanted his Alberta Southern integrated with a proposed road from Calgary to Hudson Bay making it thus possible "to draw the Pacific Coast trade over four Pacific lines for Europe via Calgary and the United States and the Hudson Bay route from here."⁵³ Throughout the early 1890s Orr corresponded at length with financial agents in England in which he gave detailed, optimistic accounts on the progress of the various railroad schemes. However, the depressed economic conditions of the times, combined with the federal government's reluctance to make a land grant available, shattered Orr's splendid



Courtesy of Glenbow-Alberta Institute

FIGURE IV—CALGARY as it looked during Orr's first tenure as mayor, 1894.

visions. He never lost hope, though, and in 1897 only a few months before his death, he commented on the revival of railway business in Canada.⁵⁴

Orr's promotional interests took many forms. In 1896 he tried to interest visiting immigration delegations in his programme for the establishment of milk-condensing factories in Alberta. He wrote to the Reverend John McDougall in 1896 suggesting the possibility of forming an Indian cavalry unit for service in Canada. While he retained an active interest in irrigation, he encouraged research into the feasibility of cloud seeding. He was one of the organizers behind the town's experiment in drilling for natural gas in 1888 and boosted the idea of a non-sectarian university in Calgary long before the movement gained momentum in Alberta. He advised the CPR on a host of matters ranging from the need for local smelters to the feasibility of maps showing the precise locations of all trains at any given time. In 1891 he attempted to promote the town of Nanton on a site advantageous to a timber limit he was trying to obtain. Orr hoped to act as commission agent in his scheme for funding the city debt in 1894, and was most active in competing for debentures issued against the Town of Calgary.

Predictably, none of these schemes bore fruit. By 1896 Orr was out of office and in indifferent health. His spirits were low, and in a letter to his married daughter the notes of despair were apparent.⁵⁵ Two years later he was dead, having left behind piling debts and a history of unsuccessful ventures.

Orr's role on Council not only exemplified the practical booster at work but also showed the vital role of single individuals in the evolution of fledgling urban institutions. City Council became an imaginative promotional agency under Orr's influence, and was to retain that character long after his death. Every mayor to 1909 had served under him. In a way Orr needed civic office as much as it needed him, and so there was a degree of interdependence in his involvement with municipal affairs. Though avowedly political and ambitious, Orr lacked the restraint which might have aided any quest for higher political honours. He was not popular with many leading Conservatives in Calgary. Some considered him meddlesome, while his open contempt for the capabilities of local Conservative politicians earned him few friends in the Calgary Conservative Association.⁵⁶ His move to secure the vacant Senate position created by the death of Richard Hardisty in 1888 was viewed as a joke in local circles. In civic politics his type of leadership might not have prevailed in later years. As long as he was the sole acknowledged expert, prepared to do all the leg work, he could command Council's support, grudging as it was at times. He probably would not have been so pivotal a figure in similar

decisions in times when City Council was larger, and its functions more diversified and complex. In the past he had thrown the weight of his support behind capable leaders, and thus expected the same loyalty from his councillors. The compromise of democratic dialogue was not part of his political experience. And in the 1890s when few were experienced in civic management, an able spokesman like Orr could exercise leadership by articulating priorities and shouldering the workload.

Orr took credence from the status of office. For example, he proudly sent his friends the cards which identified him as mayor of Calgary.⁵⁷ He liked the limelight of public life, and enjoyed head table gatherings and welcoming delegations. His involvement with City Council dignified both it and himself. In this sense he was the personal embodiment of the character of local government as it evolved in the 1890s.

Orr saw himself as a man of vision in the same way as he saw the West as a treasure chest awaiting men like himself astute enough to produce a key. Previous experience in politics and to a lesser degree religion had taught him how to throw himself wholeheartedly behind a cause. He possessed the agent's mentality towards business, even life itself. His rationale was simple. He fancied himself as being uniquely situated to evaluate potentially profitable ventures in the West. Capitalists on the other hand were not. By providing the on-the-spot liaison, Orr was confident that he could play a useful role for which his benefactors would be sufficiently grateful. He failed to realize that in an age of speculative zeal, paper schemes ran far ahead of the capital needed to implement them, or that individuals like himself were not unique. He was fond of referring to the fortunes that had been made by enterprising men and seemed genuinely to believe that success was endemic in all his schemes. Given his sublime faith in the written word it is not surprising to find a surfeit of letters, each one an act of faith, pouring from his inspired pen and addressed to people he had never met. Business dealings had shown him how an able man on the scene contributed to promotional success. He apparently had not learned the corollary lesson that the written word alone did little in the way of manipulation even if it promised instant riches.

By 1896 the name of Wesley Orr had become synonymous with local government in Calgary. Narrowly defeated in the mayoralty election for 1896, he still acted as chief advisor to the incumbent mayor and aldermen, and it was not surprising that popular demand re-installed him unopposed to the mayoralty in 1897. This was a year of failing health and fortunes. There was no chance of Priscilla's return, and his son Lorne had left home. His railway schemes were moribund,

while his land remained of dubious potential. Ill health finally removed him from civic office in late 1897. Two months later he died in hospital, and on February 19, 1898, five former mayors carried his coffin to its last resting place. Tributes were plentiful and effusive. Probably his old spokesman, the *Herald*, summed up his life most adequately:

It is unnecessary to recall to the citizens of Calgary . . . the eventful life of Mr. Orr who was perhaps the best known and respected member of the community. His name has been associated with the progress of the city since its birth, and his many efforts in that direction are too well known for recapitulation. He had no enemies and a host of friends.⁵⁸

One could argue that Orr was no more than an agitator, a meddlesome amateur whose grandiose schemes usually came to nothing. Nevertheless, in the 1890s when others were thinking only of cattle, Orr had the foresight to envision Calgary as a commercial hub for a diversified hinterland. He represented, too, an optimism that transcended years of depression and austerity. Wesley Orr and a number of like-minded individuals steered municipal government from its traditional role as mere supplier of services into an imaginative promotional agency.⁵⁹ Steeped in a tradition of political involvement he fell back on the well-worn device of the lobby to translate these promotional visions into reality. But in the 1890s, Calgary was too small, the North-West Territories too immense, and Ottawa too weak. Orr and his fellow boosters made a lot of noise as they attempted to push their communities into the twentieth century. That century, however, belonged not to them but to Canada and their sons.⁶⁰

* * *

The southwest quarter of Section 14 overlooks the Bow and Elbow Rivers. A city of a half a million sprawls up and beyond this leafy old residential area. There used to be an Orr Street in this district in 1887 when its owner brought his land within the corporate limits of the town of Calgary. Today, schools, parks, public buildings and streets carry the names of former residents who made positive contributions to the city's growth. Wesley Orr's name is perpetuated only in a stained-glass window in an Anglican church.⁶¹ The stark ruins of Calgary's first general hospital remain as silent testimony to his forgotten memory. On a grassy knoll in Union Cemetery, among the grand old vaults, crypts and ornate family plots, stands a small red-brown marble headstone superimposed on older sandstone which reads, "Wesley Fletcher Orr First Mayor City of Calgary." Though never a man of brevity, Orr doubtless would have approved of the simple tribute.

NOTES

- ¹ Orr appears to have had relatives in Ontario: William and John Orr from Hamilton; Edward E. Orr, a printer from Brantford.
- ² There were nine children—7 sons and 2 daughters. One daughter, Sarah Orr, born in 1844, died from smallpox in 1848.
- ³ Orr did not board in, but lived with a family and did certain chores for his board while he attended school.
- ⁴ When Wilfrid Laurier and his wife visited Calgary in 1894, Orr had occasion to speak with Laurier's wife. He spoke to her in French and described her as "a handsome woman of La Fontaine stock." W. Orr Papers and Diaries (hereafter cited as Orr Papers or Diary), Archives of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary.
- ⁵ For examples, see Diary Entries, Feb. 17 and Sept. 4, 1850.
- ⁶ Orr wrote in detail in his diary describing a creature born to a French Canadian Catholic family: "born with human head and ears and the rest tortoise . . . the back and belly being covered with hard shells and the feet perfectly resembling the paws of an amphibian." Orr quoted the above extract from *L'Avenir*, and then soberly commented that the priest forthwith "baptized it." See Diary Entry, Feb. 17, 1850.
- ⁷ Diary Entry, March 3, 1850.
- ⁸ This article appeared in the *Montreal Witness* Jan. 31, 1854. The *Montreal Witness* was described by P. Waite in his *Life and Times of Confederation* (Toronto, 1962), p. 46, as a "militant Protestant newspaper."
- ⁹ Diary Entry, March 3, 1850.
- ¹⁰ Diary Entry, April 1854.
- ¹¹ *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* describes Saleratus as "An impure bicarbonate of potash containing more carbon dioxide than pearl-ash does; much used as an ingredient in baking powders." The word apparently is of U.S. origin—1846 according to the dictionary.
- ¹² Diary Entry, Dec. 18, 1854.
- ¹³ Orr was somewhat conscious of his precedence in age. Not only was he the oldest cowpoke but the oldest Conservative Mason in Calgary. Orr Papers, Orr to J. A. Macdonald, Oct. 25, 1889.
- ¹⁴ Orr Papers, Orr to G. F. Frankland, April 10, 1892.
- ¹⁵ Diary Entry, May 20, 1858.
- ¹⁶ Diary Entry, January 18, 1859.
- ¹⁷ Diary Entry, December 18, 1858.
- ¹⁸ Orr Papers, Orr to C. H. Mackintosh, October 1, 1894.
- ¹⁹ Orr Papers, Orr to J. J. C. Abbott, May 27, 1889.
- ²⁰ Orr Papers, Orr to J. S. D. Thompson (Minister of Justice), May 22, 1889.
- ²¹ There are many excellent examples of this attitude in his correspondence. Orr recommended that a friend be given the position of caretaker at the Immigration House: "There are many worthy men in Conservative ranks who have upheld the government, which has upheld the country, who need a helping hand." Orr Papers, Orr to Hon. T. M. Daley, October 26, 1894.
- ²² Appointed in 1893, Mackintosh was described by L. H. Thomas as "selected primarily for faithful service to the Conservative Party." See *The North-West Territories 1870-1905* (C.H.A. Booklet No. 26, Ottawa, 1970), p. 15.
- ²³ Orr Papers, Orr to C. H. Mackintosh, October 1, 1894. The fact that Orr would maintain such to a Conservative Lieutenant-Governor indicates the intensity of Orr's beliefs. For a fuller account of Orr's self-imposed role in the National Policy, see Orr to W. H. Montague, April 1894. Prof. Donald Creighton has pointed out that the idea of National Policy was tossed around as early as 1869.
- ²⁴ Orr Papers, Orr to Acton Burroughs (*Western World*), May 7, 1896; *ibid.*, Orr to Mrs. J. Beattie, November 25, 1894. Mrs. Beattie was Orr's daughter. After his death she moved to Calgary and became well known in Calgary church circles.
- ²⁵ Orr Papers, Orr to E. Dewdney, October 25, 1889.
- ²⁶ For example, see Orr to Mrs. J. Beattie, March 24, 1895. Orr had three children: Maggie (Mrs. J. Beattie), who was married to a CPR station agent by the time of Orr's separation; Addie (Wood); and Lorne, who was about seven years old when Orr came to Calgary (1886).
- ²⁷ Fort Calgary was situated on the trail from Fort Macleod to Edmonton. This trail was primarily for oxen and Red River carts. Indeed Calgary was the change-over point from oxen team to Red River cart. Apparently the ground north of Calgary was too soft for the oxen teams.
- ²⁸ The authenticity of these claims was a subject for debate as early as 1881.
- ²⁹ Glenbow-Alberta Archives, George Murdoch Papers (on microfilm). According to observations made by Murdoch, many expected that the station would be on Section 14.
- ³⁰ Orr Papers, Orr to J. J. C. Abbott, May 27, 1889. Orr left the Mortgage Company in 1881 and entered a lumber business in which he "lost heavily by repeated failures."
- ³¹ Murdoch Papers, Observations by George Murdoch.
- ³² *Herald*, Jan. 23, 1884. Over 200 lots were sold that first day.

- ³³ Orr Papers, Orr to C. H. Mackintosh, October 1, 1894.
- ³⁴ Orr Papers, Orr to D. McCarthy, May 22, 1889.
- ³⁵ Orr Papers, Orr to his partner, M. Schreiber, April 22, 1894.
- ³⁶ Orr Papers, Orr to his brother, E. S. Orr, Aug. 8, 1890.
- ³⁷ For an example of this attitude see M. L. Foran, "The Travis Affair and the Town of Calgary," *Alberta Historical Review*, Vol. 19 (Autumn, 1971), pp. 1-7. Also, Orr and other civic figures are placed in the context of the community's development in Max Foran, *Calgary: An Illustrated History* (Toronto, 1978).
- ³⁸ For a good example see Diary Entry, March 29, 1894.
- ³⁹ These included: real estate agent, debt collector, agent for collecting buffalo bones, loan and mortgage agent.
- ⁴⁰ Diary Entry, March 29, 1894.
- ⁴¹ Glenbow-Alberta Archives, *Calgary Council Minutes* (hereafter cited as *C.C.M.*), April 19, 1888.
- ⁴² *Tribune*, Nov. 25, 1887; Orr Papers, Orr to F. White, Nov. 20, 1890.
- ⁴³ Orr Papers, Orr to M. Schreiber, May 29, June 1, 1890; Orr to E. S. Orr, Aug. 8, 1890; *Tribune*, Sept. 10, 1890. They were probably envisaging a southern counterpart to Strathcona, Edmonton's terminus of the Calgary and Edmonton line.
- ⁴⁴ *C.C.M.*, Nov. 18, 1892.
- ⁴⁵ For information on the League and the Convention see *C.C.M.*, Feb. 28, 1894; *Herald*, *Tribune*, March 7, 8, 9, 10, 1894; Orr Diary, March 5, 8, 18, 21, 1894.
- ⁴⁶ Orr Papers, Orr to George A. Stimson, Financial Agent, Nov. 10, 1894.
- ⁴⁷ Orr Papers, Orr to Hon. J. Carling, March 1, 1892. See also *C.C.M.*, Jan. 30, 1892.
- ⁴⁸ The British held a low opinion of western horses, maintaining that they were too small to be of practical use. See *Tribune*, Aug. 14, Sept. 4, 1886.
- ⁴⁹ *C.C.M.*, Oct. 6, 1892; *ibid.*, May 2, 1893; *Herald*, Jan. 26, March 1, April 21, 1893; Orr Diary, April 4, 1893, March 4, 1896.
- ⁵⁰ *Weekly Gazette* (Barrie), Feb. 2, 1881.
- ⁵¹ Orr Papers, Orr to C. H. Mackintosh, October 25, 1894.
- ⁵² Orr Papers, Orr to N. G. Conrad, Jan. 22, 1895.
- ⁵³ Orr Papers, Orr to Duncan McArthur, Nov. 20, 1894.
- ⁵⁴ Orr Papers, Orr to J. G. Osborne, February 15, 1896; *ibid.*, Orr to Mrs. J. Beattie, Aug. 1, 1897.
- ⁵⁵ Orr Diary, April 30, 1896; Orr Papers, Orr to Rev. J. McDougall, Jan. 22, 1896; *ibid.*, Orr to Clayton B. Jewell, Aug. 13, 1894; *ibid.*, Orr to M. Schreiber, April 22, 1894; *ibid.*, Orr to D. McNicholl, Gov't. Passenger Agent, CPR, April 13, 1896; *ibid.*, Orr to A. Nanton, Aug. 26, 1891; Orr Diary, Feb. 19, 1894; Orr Papers, Orr to Lieut. Gov. Mackintosh, June 23, 1895; and *ibid.*, Orr to Mrs. J. Beattie, April 8, 1896.
- ⁵⁶ For example he once described D. W. Davis, Conservative M.P. for Alberta, as a "mere whisky trader."
- ⁵⁷ Orr Papers, Orr to Adam Orr, April 26, 1896.
- ⁵⁸ *Herald*, Feb. 17, 1898.
- ⁵⁹ On Calgary Council alone, one could name (besides Orr) James Reilly, A. Lucas, and P. McCarthy. For a discussion of several Calgary boosters see M. Foran, "The Boosters in Boosterism: Some Calgary Examples," *Urban History Review*, Vol. VIII (October 1979), pp. 77-82. This is an area that needs further research. Other local governments must have contained very similar men (e.g., Rev. Leo Gaetz of Red Deer).
- ⁶⁰ Lorne Orr was far more successful than his father, becoming one of Banff's leading businessmen.
- ⁶¹ *Herald*, May 27, 1961. This article elaborates on the presentation of the window, and—if inaccurate in places—gives some background information on Orr's life.

12. THE ORIGINAL CITY OF EDMONTON: A DERIVATIVE PRAIRIE URBAN COMMUNITY

CARL BETKE

One simple test of a theory of urbanization is whether it will indicate precisely or even approximately the point at which a non-city becomes a city. In strictly legal terms, Edmonton received city incorporation in 1904; Strathcona, its attached neighbour community south of the North Saskatchewan River, in 1907. At the conclusion of this analysis of a prairie urban community in 1906, it should be clear that the designation was appropriate for Edmonton but not for Strathcona, which was in reality a subordinate part of the Edmonton community. The theory on which this depends is derived from a tantalizing article by Leo Schnore, written more than a decade ago, in which he suggested the proper way to understand an urban entity: as a social organism.¹ A discussion of western urban social welfare in Canada by John Taylor hinted incidentally at the degree to which established cities were webs of organization.² Those citizens who did not organize themselves adequately to cope with the demands of the community gradually became objects of attention for organizers activating the concept of public or social welfare. The very term emphasizes a dedication to the welfare not so much of individuals as of the organism which they comprised. Misfits often seemed not just peripheral but burdensome, sometimes even dangerous. To put it another way, without commitment (however unwitting) to community, there would be no concern for welfare on a group level, only one to one concerns among individuals. In the study of Edmonton development, one gains the overwhelming impression that individual pursuits and the quality of individual lives came irreversibly to depend on the quality of the urban organism. A tyranny of community was exerted in which it became unimaginable to live without it.

To isolate Edmonton in 1906 does not, of course, illustrate the pattern over time, but it does provide an example of the collective process getting underway with future commitments so strong they would not later be easily escaped. The basic requirements for urban community were there: a substantial influx of people responding to a perceived demand for their occupational services. Complexity of

occupational specialization in itself needs economic co-ordination in order to work, but beyond that the accompanying concentration of population in close residential proximity forces other levels of co-operation. The stage Edmonton was at in 1906 permits a close look at how pressure for utility and health services, the necessity to resolve sectional tensions, the existence of fraternal and service associations, and mass recreation all contributed to the rapid consolidation of an urban community in Edmonton not very different from those elsewhere in North America.

I

Edmonton in 1906 had changed dramatically from its nineteenth century village state, and the principal dynamic was growth. In Edmonton city were counted 11,167 residents; in Strathcona town 2,921; in all, over 14,000 citizens of whom four-fifths were newcomers since the Klondike gold rush of 1898. The late nineteenth century stability suggested by the presence of equal numbers of males and females was replaced by the frontier condition indicated by a clear majority of men over women. Nearly 60 percent of the population was male in 1906 (see Table I). Not just the expansion, but also the expansionism of the place is strikingly illustrated by the escalation which had taken place in the number of men engaged in property development. Real estate agencies (at least 64), building contractors (43), the providers of assorted builders' materials (at least 23), and insurance agencies (29) dominated Edmonton business. Expansion of population and accommodation was showing a very specific source of profit. The booming urban centres were set in the midst of a prospering agricultural countryside where two or three times as many farmers laboured in 1906 as in 1901; still, the city—particularly Edmonton proper—outdistanced the country in population growth rate.³

The economic development of Edmonton in 1906 was very much a story of railways and real estate. The special advantage acquired by

TABLE I

POPULATION BY SEXES IN EDMONTON, 1901-1911

Year	Male	Female	Total
1901	1,374	1,252	2,626
1906	6,652	4,515	11,167
1911	13,933	10,967	24,900

SOURCES: *Censuses of Canada*, 1901 and 1911; *Census of Population and Agriculture of the Northwest Provinces*, 1906.

Edmonton which was the main foundation for the rising property values was railway centrality. Before 1902 local rail service, namely the Calgary and Edmonton Railway operated by the CPR, terminated at Strathcona. By 1906, however, not only was there a rail connection of the C&E Railway to the north side, but there were also two new incipient transcontinentals chugging to the Edmonton side of the river: the Canadian Northern Railway of William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, and the Grand Trunk Pacific. Not to be left entirely out of the more northerly east-west traffic, the CPR in the same year constructed its own parallel line from Winnipeg through Saskatoon to Wetaskiwin, forty miles south of Edmonton, where it would connect with the C&E Railway, making Strathcona the terminus.⁴ Thus stimulated, real estate agencies multiplied, urban land costs soared and surrounding agricultural land was speedily filled. Sawmills expanded, lumber prices jumped repeatedly, and the demand for coal brought prosperity for another local industry.⁵ The first Alberta legislature, dominated by governing Liberals from northern Alberta, delivered to the city the permanent site of the provincial capital. The new Liberal Premier, Strathcona's A. C. Rutherford, quietly negotiated the purchase for the province of a south side land package where he was determined to establish the University of Alberta.⁶ The boom created a demand for manpower, and that portion of the general immigration stream which was diverted to the city introduced an ethnic shift in the population along with the growth of a working class population. Prosperity was accompanied by the beginning of social differentiations which would require some effort to overcome.

TABLE II

POPULATION GROWTH IN EDMONTON AND STRATHCONA, 1901-1911

	1901	1906	1911
Edmonton	2,626	11,167	24,900
Strathcona	1,550	2,921	5,579

SOURCES: See Table I.

Despite the entry of more European immigrants into Edmonton than ever before, the city was, if anything, even more Anglo-Saxon than it had been before the turn of the century. This apparent oddity is explained by the relatively static situation of the French-speaking population, whose strength of more than 500 made up a decreasing proportion of the total. Putting a generous construction on the matter, one might credit to the French population five percent of the whole,

whereas all other minority ethnic groups together might already add up to ten percent. Of the latter element, those with Germanic names made up roughly half. These would presumably have been born in German, Austro-Hungarian, American or Canadian territories. A German Community was clearly visible: there were German Lutheran and Baptist clergymen serving both sides of the river, a thriving German "Edelweiss" Club, a German book store and a locally published German language newspaper called the *Alberta Herold*.

Other groups had so far been almost as unnoticeable institutionally as they were numerically—two or three hundred people of Slavic or other east European extraction, fewer than a hundred each of Scandinavians, Jews, East Asians, and Dutch. But religious congregations had just been created for Jews and Ukrainians, while the more all-embracing Catholic congregation found it necessary to arrange sermons in seven languages—French, English, German, Polish, Galician, Ruthenian, and Cree. Laundry and restaurant services were favourite and obvious Chinese enterprises, and the Chinese were inevitably curiosities of special interest. Fascination about what might be going on in the back rooms of Chinese restaurants was as keen in 1906 as it had been in the early 1890s.⁷

The Ukrainian population was recognizable mainly in the city's Catholic organizations. Basilian missionaries from late 1902 on attracted Ukrainians to St. Joachim's and Ste. Anne's parishes with Ukrainian language masses and music, and they stimulated the construction of the separate Ukrainian St. Josaphat's church in 1904. In individual homes were established two or three "Chytalnia" societies, in which merchant, real estate dealer and developer Paul Rudyk seems to have been instrumental. Rudyk was a complex individual, however, whose home was also apparently the site for the origin of a Ukrainian Labour Fraternity ("Rivnist").⁸ The Edmonton Hebrew Association was even newer, founded by ten Jewish Edmontonians only in August 1906 under the direction of the clothing merchants Abraham Cristall and William Diamond with the assistance of newly arrived Hyman Goldstick. Goldstick had been brought from Toronto specifically to take on the formal teaching and religious leadership duties for the Association and the Edmonton Hebrew Congregation of Beth Israel it fostered. To Goldstick fell the chore of uniting the Edmonton Jewish peoples of sundry geographic origins and religious traditions in the common cause.⁹

The French-speaking community, despite its proportional decline, occupied a far different kind of minority position in Edmonton. Its leadership seemed to react to the diminishing proportion of French people in Edmonton by its most determined organizational effort. Close social contact was maintained by the elite,

while Saint Jean Baptiste Day was made an event of fellowship encompassing French-speaking Catholics of the entire district. The memory of the 1905 struggle by Edmonton's St. Jean Baptiste Society to maintain French constitutional rights in education in the new province of Alberta seems to have sustained a vigorous community for some years to follow. A new publication, *Le Courrier de L'Ouest*, was founded by general merchant Prosper Edmond Lessard and Dr. Phillippe Roy, the former soon to become a Liberal provincial cabinet minister, the latter a Liberal senator from the date of Alberta provincial inauguration in September 1905.¹⁰

These two individuals were examples of a second difference between the French and other minority ethnic groups. The French presence in Edmonton and the surrounding district went back early enough that some had become prominent professionals or businessmen who took their residential place among the substantial dwellings of the west end dominated by a prosperous English-speaking set. Few among the other ethnic newcomers found their homes in that relatively exclusive neighbourhood in 1906; most of them were labourers or tradesmen. Except for the traditional clustering of French-speaking people around St. Joachim's parish in the far west, the city (excluding Strathcona) divided pretty definitely into more and less well-to-do sections. West of First Street, especially the first six streets, and mostly south of Jasper Avenue, close to the North Saskatchewan River banks, was the domain of prosperous businessmen, professionals and senior civil servants. East of First Street and mainly north of Jasper Avenue were the labourers, tradesmen, marginal businessmen and alien ethnic newcomers. Pretty well three-quarters of Edmonton lawyers and doctors, financiers and senior civil servants, as well as a large majority of businessmen, lived in the west end. A larger proportion of the prosperous lived in the east end, however, than could be found of the less well-off in the west end, for many established veterans continued to reside in the area which had once been the village core, but which was now rarely chosen by well-heeled newcomers. Some of the older residents in the east end, however, were less than pleased with the transformation they thought they detected taking place.¹¹

The concept of an urban elite¹² had taken hold in Edmonton, though naturally different observers held different opinions about its membership. For our purposes, analysis of three separate sources suggests sufficient overlap to permit certain important generalizations. Biographical sources¹³ yield the names of some 175 publicly successful men (mostly north-siders) representing about six percent of greater Edmonton families, but possibly representative of a wider commercial and professional upper class. They were occupationally quite distinct,

according to a fairly predictable pattern. Almost nine-tenths of those recorded were directing urban services, as opposed to manufacturing industries: professions (29 percent), commerce (14 percent), real estate and financial services (14 percent), construction-related enterprises (8 percent), assorted other service businesses (10 percent), and the newly-arrived phenomenon, government (11 percent). Government positions in fact outnumbered proprietors of agriculture-related manufacturing and sales enterprises (9 percent).

Members of the elite came as outsiders perceiving vacuums they might successfully fill. Better than three-quarters of them came from birthplaces in other parts of Canada; more than half from Ontario. Most of the remainder were born in Great Britain. Their parents' origins appear to confirm that pattern, with a slight reinforcement of the British background. Their Christian denominationalism was more or less of the Ontario and maritime pattern, more than two-fifths Presbyterian, one-quarter Anglican, one-sixth Methodist and only one-tenth Catholic. These Canadian Protestants grew up mainly in modest rural or village situations, but definitely not in urban poverty. Half of them had some education other than secondary school: in universities (particularly professional schools), trade schools, business colleges or apprenticeship programs. Relatively young (average age 40), but not straight from their education or training, most had left their original occupations and adult locations or had tried two separate livelihoods before arriving in Edmonton or Strathecona. The mean of their years in Edmonton was nine, but the majority had come after the turn of the century.

A second way to isolate an urban elite is to observe members at their ease. During the Christmas season of 1905 there appeared for the first time in Edmonton *The Saturday News*, with a striking and substantial women's section, *The Mirror*.¹⁴ The subsection entitled "Home and Society" was during 1906 devoted to details of the entertainments indulged in principally by those women and the men who associated with one another in the guise of Edmonton's embryo elite. In the columns filled with elaborate description of "At Homes," "recherché" luncheons, parties featuring the card game known as "500," private skating parties, dances, downtown luncheons for the men, the affairs of a genteel cricket club, and the receptions and grand balls of the new Lieutenant-Governor, two things can be perceived. First, these were perfectly intelligent people, who no doubt thought of themselves as civic leaders, and who presented these spectacles in full knowledge of their contrived artificiality. The very care taken to create a veneer of social refinement, to elevate their style of entertainment above the norm, as they thought it, provides a measure of their sense of special importance. And second, a list of some 180 Edmonton and

Strathcona family units can be made from the names mentioned in *The Mirror's* columns in 1906. As in the biographical sample, professionals were predominant, particularly doctors and lawyers, while bank and other finance executives, and some senior officials of the federal and new provincial civic services, also stood out. Of the community's businessmen, once again, those associated with property development—contractors, hardware merchants, real estate and insurance agents—were the best represented. Their residential focus was even more definitely in the west end of the city than that of the biographical sample and, for the small group (one-quarter) whose names were also in that sample, biographical details were roughly the same.

A third approach to identifying an Edmonton elite is to study the membership of the exclusive Edmonton Club.¹⁵ For the 106 Edmonton and (very few) Strathcona members in 1906, occupational and residential characteristics corresponded closely with those of the other two clusters. The biographical overlap for this group was only two-fifths, but for those on both this and the biographical lists the proportion of Anglicans (two-fifths) and Catholics (one-quarter) rose at the expense of Presbyterians (less than one-quarter) in the biographical proportions. Though that was the only notable distinction, the overlap among all three groups here isolated was very small, between one-eighth and one-fifth. What is to be made of this lack of unanimity in the identification of Edmonton's socially most important citizens? Perhaps that in so rapidly expanding a centre it was not yet easy to sort out the socially superior from the ordinary, especially given the short residency in Edmonton enjoyed by the majority. The task was not made any simpler by the relatively homogeneous and primarily non-elitist backgrounds of the contenders for the honours. If, however, the question of the community's leadership had been thrown somewhat open by the rapid influx of newcomers, it would still have been obvious that the opportunity did not extend to alien immigrants with a poor grasp of the English language, or to those of poor education and reduced means. A recognizable chasm was being developed by the city's prosperity between two distinguishable sections of the population.

II

A booming economy and multiplication of the urban population exerted unique pressures for collective approaches to a host of new problems. The city's two basic solutions were not exactly innovations, but were borrowed from available examples for their aptness to the condition of rapid growth: public ownership of utilities and a professional executive branch of civic government. Strathcona's

response to the situation was dependent upon the nature of Edmonton's; it will be considered separately later. For Edmonton citizens, the task of coping with common requirements was in 1906 understood to comprehend the provision of the following services: modern streets and sidewalks, electricity, telephones, water and sewerage, a street railway, parks, education and, reluctantly, some supervision of public health. On the other hand, obvious growth encouraged optimistic visions of proliferating future good fortune. Civic administration was managed, therefore, not only to cope with an increasing magnitude in collective problems of utility and welfare services after they arose, but also to prepare for the continuing boom to come.

Moreover, the expectation of prevailing growth suggested an apparently logical way to finance urban utility advances: property taxation. Actually there were further implications to property assessment beyond simple taxation. High assessments and low taxation rates were believed to accomplish good civic advertising to attract new business and to boost the limits of civic borrowing. Net Edmonton assessment after exemptions was in 1906 set at more than \$17,000,000 which, in the conventional wisdom, permitted borrowing power to 20 percent or \$3,400,000. That the city in the fall of 1906 had a debenture liability of just over \$1,000,000, half of it in sinking funds, could therefore be interpreted as a "splendid condition" against the possible limits of borrowing power.¹⁶

Some rather imposing costs could in this atmosphere pass as routine, like a year-end commitment to nearly \$300,000 worth of future paving. After 1902 Edmonton's electric light and power had been municipally administered precisely for the purpose of ensuring continued expansion of the service without running out of funds. By 1906, therefore, this public utility could display fine operating profits as long as capital costs of ceaseless construction and equipment purchase were kept in a widely-separated accounting column. It was possible on the one hand to cut power rates in the middle of the year while on the other hand concurrently adding to the city's debt by increasing the number of arc street lights. When a potential plan to build a hydro-electric power development on the North Saskatchewan River fifty miles west of the city threatened to require a capital outlay of \$1,000,000 and annual operating funds of \$140,000, it is difficult to say which sum caused the more consternation. Capital debt was one thing; operating expense which would be covered by high power prices was likely the key factor in scuttling the proposal.¹⁷

The telephone system was another utility which the municipality had taken over from private operators after their original ten-year charter was concluded in 1903. The twin demands for expansion and



Courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta

JASPER AVENUE LOOKING WEST, 1906.

modernization enabled city council in 1906 to pass a \$65,000 bylaw for a new automatic system with a landslide majority in a poor ratepayers' voting turnout.¹⁸ Nor was there any fuss in July about undertaking the immense financial and managerial burden of a \$300,000 expenditure on "the largest public work ever projected in Edmonton, or [for] that matter by any municipality between Winnipeg and the Pacific coast": major extensions of water and sewerage pipelines. The lack of disputation here was even more remarkable considering that the necessity for replacing mains with much larger pipes and for installing a new three million gallon electrically driven pump had tripled what began as a mere \$113,000 estimate. Council discussions of sewerage and water plans, however, were typically characterized by opposition to "temporizing" with construction that would be overloaded immediately, and by calls for "the best, not the cheapest" systems to last 50 or 100 years.¹⁹

It would perhaps be difficult to argue against the importance of proper water distribution and sewerage disposal in relation to sanitation and the reduction of disease. The early history of plans for a street railway, on the other hand, bespoke pure civic and commercial ambition. Though from 1894 to 1905 an Edmonton street railway proved too grand a project for successful private accomplishment, so determined was the Edmonton council to have the system that private failure was interpreted not as reason to abandon the project but as justification for making it a public one. Most of 1906 was consumed by a consulting engineer's study of the likely cost of a twelve-block stretch of street railway along Jasper Avenue (the main street). His report in October predicted that installation of track and purchase of equipment would require over \$100,000. The visiting general manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce thought a current typhoid epidemic emphasized more legitimate fields for municipal expenditure, but ratepayers remained unaffected and in December overwhelmingly approved purchase of street rails and trolley wire for some six miles of street railway. It was the first step to a small system which became operational in 1908.²⁰

It was probably no accident either in the halcyon expansion years after city incorporation that the council was frequently presented with offers of new property for park land. Quite apart from any profit the generous donors might earn or deny themselves in the direct sale, there was no doubt that firm establishment of future park land in any area would improve real estate prices in the vicinity. When on one occasion some private citizens took the initiative to secure land for parkland until the city had time to act officially, this was judged a gesture of Edmonton's "public spirited citizens" of the same variety, significantly, as those responsible for securing the city's first bridge and the

Canadian Northern Railway depot. On a larger scale, a Board of Trade interested in attracting new business by presenting a favourable picture of residential amenities did not hesitate, in November 1905, to put pressure on city council to extend its park land. One of the Board's suggestions was that council assist the financially strapped Edmonton Industrial Exhibition Association by purchasing the land on which it paid rent to Messrs. McDougall and Secord, successful local businessmen. In June burgesses approved a \$46,000 expenditure to obtain for parks 100 acres far to the west and about 250 acres in two eastern river lot packages. Before the end of the year they approved a further \$60,000 outlay to purchase the large Exhibition Association grounds, an acquisition which was completed in the following year.²¹

The conclusion cannot easily be avoided that Edmontonians were being loaded with a current and future debt burden with startling rapidity and long-term consequences. A negative sort of collective urban interest was being imposed on Edmonton's people. The point has been made often enough that, in Edmonton as elsewhere before the Great War, shared urban utilities would not only overcome some of the difficulties of dense and populous urban residence, they would also satisfy businessmen and speculators in urban and rural property who had opportunities to extract private profit from urban expansion.²² As long as a bright future beckoned, it was apparently easy to believe that it would handle the mounting debt as well. One of the reasons this cynical view is so easy to hold is the hesitancy with which unprofitable health and social welfare services were approached. Only in 1906 did the requirements of public health and fire prevention finally move council to accept city commissioners' recommendations that "horses and a scavenging outfit be purchased and maintained as a street cleaning department," and that a sanitary inspector be appointed (with multiple extra duties as caretaker and nurse of the isolation hospital and quarantine officer). Endemic smallpox, malaria and diphtheria were not reason enough to build a decent isolation hospital; it took a typhoid epidemic in 1906 to frighten officials into action. The city's doctors pressed the city to enforce its by-law requiring connections of residences to the city's water and sewer systems; meanwhile council was embarrassed to discover some city-owned houses not only with typhoid cases but also with no sewer and water connections. The epidemic no doubt also increased the overwhelming majority by which the money by-law for an isolation hospital passed in August, even as it conveniently calmed east-end objections to the proposed east-end site.²³

The transition of hospital administration from private and voluntary to public support and care in other than emergency conditions was not nearly complete by 1906. In Edmonton the

voluntary Women's Aid Society of the public hospital was a firmly-entrenched institution with more than 130 members and the desire to be bigger. The Society was still the major fund raiser for the hospital's operations, even if its members did worry about the prospects for voluntarily clearing the hospital of operational debt. At the end of the year, however, plans were underway for the city to build a new public hospital. Rapid expansion of health services threatened to overreach the capacity of the Women's Aid Society to raise enough health care funds privately. By way of contrast, in 1906 Strathcona was just equipping its first tiny temporary hospital in a six-bedroom house, and a Strathcona Ladies' Hospital Aid Society was just being formed by wives of some of Strathcona's prominent citizens. And in terms of social welfare, neither municipality had progressed further than the relief committee method of handling the most extreme financial need.²⁴ But the plans for a new public hospital and an isolation hospital indicated how health emergencies could push even reluctant leaders into costly health and welfare services as well.

Education was a far better accepted responsibility. The four school boards (public and separate) of the two municipalities had but one overriding concern in 1906: to provide enough school space for the multiplying pupil enrolment. Their deliberations were uniformly about building programs. Otherwise, even salary adjustments provoked no great controversy; trustees themselves observed that teachers dissatisfied with the inadequate remuneration solved their problem by leaving the profession. Thus, the manifold opportunity in boom-time Edmonton worked its own pressure on the school boards to raise teachers' salaries.²⁵

The same unusual opportunity reduced aldermen's anxiety to induce new businesses to locate in the city by offering financial advantages of lower taxes and utility rates or free land. Faced with several applications, councillors eventually worked out a meagre policy to offer water, power and light at cost. There was one enormous exception in 1906. To civic leaders starved for direct transcontinental railway connections from the expectant days of 1881 to 1905, there was no hesitation about bonusing railway companies. For the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, Edmonton council had city burgesses approve a bonus of \$100,000 together with long-term tax exemptions in 1905 even before surveys were completed. That offer went into effect in November 1906, when the necessary federal order-in-council approved the GTP routes through Edmonton, but not before civic officials had spent several more months arranging land purchases to open the desired right of way. Otherwise, Edmonton's council clearly preferred the much more discreet and limited cost of civic grants to the Board of Trade to promote Edmonton opportunities by pamphlets, newspaper advertisements and paid agents at eastern fall fairs.²⁶

Nevertheless, Edmonton city council paid its Board of Trade proportionally far more than the Strathcona town council paid its Board for similar services. This was a good indication of the limits on Strathcona boosterism which made all the more believable Edmonton Mayor Charles May's boast that Edmonton and Strathcona would soon form a single more imposing metropolis.²⁷ For that was the essential difference in the collective Strathcona response to urban service requirements: smaller Strathcona had an alternative not open to Edmonton, simply to attach itself in whole or in part to the larger urban neighbour, to join another community rather than create a separate one. That alternative seems to have gained respectability during 1905 and 1906 when both the CNR and GTP chose to locate terminals in Edmonton rather than in Strathcona.²⁸

Strathcona council was left with the CPR, to which it belatedly offered land and tax-exemption inducements to build impressive new terminal facilities and the long-surveyed high level bridge to Edmonton.²⁹ But even this attempt to improve its traditional rail connections southward had, in the wake of the sudden Canadian Northern and GTP advances into Edmonton, not nearly the impact or purpose it might have had earlier during the period of Strathcona's railway advantage. Moreover, a CPR high level bridge to Edmonton would provide another though more indirect transcontinental route for Edmonton freight besides those of the two competitors. The inevitable result after its eventual completion would be co-operation among the three lines and an additional impetus to amalgamation of the two communities. Hence, promotion of the high level bridge was an ironic response to the disturbing realization that Strathcona as a separate entity had been left out of the northern transcontinental railways. Strathcona council in the fall of 1906 authorized a railway approach route to the proposed bridge site. At that time the citizens of Strathcona, whether oblivious of the consequences or resigned to the inevitable, were pressing even more forcefully than the citizens of Edmonton for addition of a non-railway "traffic floor" level on the bridge.³⁰

It was the Strathcona Board of Trade which first sent resolutions in April to the provincial and federal governments requesting healthy contributions to the expected \$311,000 extra cost for a traffic floor. As the Edmonton Board of Trade discussed its own endorsement of those resolutions, a leading Strathcona advocate urged the move as a morale booster for a petition circulating in Strathcona. The petition recommended that Strathcona ratepayers take upon themselves fifteen percent of the traffic floor cost up to a maximum of \$50,000. In short order that petition, with Premier Rutherford's name at the head of a list of 255, was presented to Strathcona council. When action was not sufficiently prompt, a "committee of leading citizens" which included

ex-Mayor Davies called on Council personally early in May and extracted a promise of a public meeting on the issue. At that public meeting no argument was offered against the traffic floor. The only modification cherished by Mayor W. H. Sheppard was to saddle the Alberta and Canadian governments with the full cost. A committee of eight, including the mayor, the ex-mayor, Board of Trade President Orlando Bush, and Alderman J. M. Douglas, was created to accomplish the project. When council appeared to relax its efforts through 1906, the Board of Trade kept up pressure by delegation. While satisfactory arrangements were not achieved until 1910, it is not possible to see in the 1906 controversy the least sign of resistance to the submergence of Strathcona identity in an integrated transportation and business system for greater Edmonton.

During these years there were, in fact, positive signs that leading Strathconans now saw Strathcona's future in tandem with Edmonton's. It is true that the old dream of city status was pushed to its conclusion toward the end of 1906, culminating in city incorporation in March 1907, but there were short-term practical considerations to that: for qualified towns, city incorporation gave additional financial power, which was the main argument for it offered by the *Strathcona Plaindealer* and the Board of Trade. That this move did not indicate aggressive championship of a separate Strathcona is confirmed on the one hand by an accompanying failure to solicit assisted location of new businesses in Strathcona, and on the other hand by the trend to share utilities with Edmonton. In several fields—electric power, street lighting, water and sewerage, streets and sidewalks, parks—Strathcona already had systems which its council continued to maintain.³¹ In the expensive fields of transportation and communication, however, co-operation with Edmonton seemed to have certain advantages.

Associated with the idea of a high level bridge was the project of the Strathcona Radial Tramway Company, the majority of whose directors were from Edmonton. Since an October 1904 incorporation, the company's intention was to create an integrated system connecting Strathcona, Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan, with the possibility of future radial extension up to eighty miles from 1904 town boundaries. In September 1906 the directors sought a thirty-year franchise and a ten- to twelve-year taxation exemption from both Strathcona and Edmonton in return "after a time" for sharing profits with the municipalities. The significance of Strathcona council's acceptance of the scheme in principle was not that any action followed immediately—in fact it did not for several years—but that Strathcona officials raised no fierce objection to so close an integration with the commercially more powerful neighbour.³² The same was true for development of Strathcona's telephone system. Since 1901 it had been

an adjunct of the Edmonton system which, since 1903, had been run by the municipality of Edmonton as a public utility. In 1906, when advances in telephone technology and population growth made the old system seem as inadequate in Strathcona as in Edmonton, one alternative for Strathcona was to develop its own modern system. But council swiftly decided to negotiate with Edmonton for the cheaper expedient: simple extension of the new Edmonton automatic system throughout Strathcona according to the terms of a fifteen-year franchise.³³

Disappointments over rail-lines and strain on Strathcona's capacity to provide urban services were insistently highlighting the easier solution of amalgamation with larger Edmonton at precisely the same time as Edmonton's corporate approach to utility expansion was undergoing extraordinary escalation. Edmonton municipal council became increasingly and irrevocably important to its citizens, not only as expansion emphasized the need for physical and health services, but also as the civic debt mounted. To discharge that debt must mean the continuation or adaptation of the institutions through which it had been accumulated. The eager acquisition of utilities was a financial commitment of the community as a whole; the community as a whole must discharge the cost over a long period of time. Furthermore, the community already had a taste of the way this process was inevitably extended by the requirements for maintenance and improvement of some services. The persistence of problems like epidemic disease and poverty was forcing reluctant community attention to public health and welfare, a commitment equally difficult to retreat from once entered. A corollary to the effect on collective financial commitment was the perception of a need for more sophisticated administrative machinery.

Certain Edmonton leaders were instrumental in adapting the executive branch to cope with the increasing civic business. One of these was William Short, who in 1904 had imposed his ideas on the charter of city incorporation. What he proposed was not unique, but borrowed from recommendations of Ontario municipal government experts, especially former Toronto solicitor W. H. Biggar. The general point was to perfect a form of government which would temper the democracy of an elected council with institutions promoting efficient corporate administration and planning—to modify the voices of individual citizens with the bureaucracy of an organic entity. A town the size of Edmonton could not immediately be said to require the separation of legislative and administrative branches of government. The town had begun with a small council and only one commissioner other than the mayor; but it could be and was argued that provision in this form was farsightedly made for the future. "Business efficiency"

characterized also the nature of aldermanic representation. The town opted, not for the ward system (which had been judged corrupt by municipal experts surveying the influence of sectors of the population in major American and central Canadian cities), but for the system in which aldermen represented the city as a whole. In 1906 Alderman W. A. Griesbach made the Edmonton application unmistakably explicit: "where there is a foreign element, it is often difficult to find a suitable representative."³⁴

While Strathcona would at the end of 1906 make plans to follow Edmonton's example, in Edmonton not all aldermen appreciated Short's outlook on the value of the new arrangements. In 1906—as, indeed, in years to come—Edmonton city council struggled to accommodate the apparently conflicting jurisdiction of the commissioners' branch. The broader issue arose from an unedifying debate about the competence of City Engineer J. H. Hargreaves. Whether or not to dispense with his services, on the basis of charges that he had supervised some cement work of inferior quality, and had grossly underestimated the costs of certain sewerage works, was a question paradoxically solved by creating a new Commissioner of Public Works position for Hargreaves while appointing another chief engineer to work under him. Hargreaves' argument that the expansion of public works in the city's priorities created undue pressure on administrators was obviously a telling one. Here was an advance in the framework of the 1904 charter arrangements: to the first commissioner (Secretary-Treasurer G. J. Kinnaird) was now added a second; to the first all-encompassing correspondence and financial duties of the old town clerk were now added the boom city responsibilities of a Public Works Commissioner to extend utilities as rapidly as possible.³⁵

Sorting out the administrative jurisdictions of the new officials occupied several months of wearying squabbles. At about the same time the commissioners were engaged in a confrontation with the voluntary fire brigade—a problem which they solved by replacing the voluntary firemen with a smaller but full-time force. Alderman Griesbach was, however, an "old boy" of the voluntary brigade, and he did his futile best to reinstate the voluntary system.³⁶ For varying reasons, therefore, some aldermen were in 1906 discontented with the separation of council and commissioners' functions. They stimulated a full debate of the underlying principles. Late in April the new provincial legislature found itself studying a number of amendments to the Edmonton Charter proposed by the Edmonton council, among them two designed to increase council control over the commissioners. One would have reduced the two-thirds majority council required to dismiss a commissioner. The other would have taken all administrative powers from the commissioners and vested them in the council with the

latter retaining the option of delegating authority to the commissioners.

As Alderman Griesbach argued the case before the legislative committee of the whole, the question was whether commissioners' powers should be derived from the legislature as embodied in the Charter, or from the city council; as it was, he claimed, the commissioners were out of public control. Members of the legislature, including Attorney General Cross, himself an Edmonton law partner of William Short, seemed inclined to believe petty quibbling undermined the Edmonton council's principles. Cross' legal partner, Short, was present as well to make with confidence the same points he had in 1904. Business involving \$800,000 and more, contended Short, required consistent planning and executive administration. The council changed composition each year and aldermen had not sufficient time to spend on administration. Indeed, he observed, "the better the aldermen the less time they have," for they would properly be addressing their attention to legislating policy. Better that administrative details be left to commissioners responsible to the elected council but free of undue "cajolery." It was the system of the joint stock company that Short advocated, with councillors in the place of directors, commissioners in the place of managers. The amendments requested had not been placed before a public meeting in the city nor, Short was certain, would the businessmen of Edmonton either request or accept them. Noting little urgency, Cross commented that more general municipal legislation was in any case due next year, and the amendments died in committee.

Along the same line, both the ex-alderman and now Liberal MLA J. R. Boyle on the one hand and the *Edmonton Bulletin* editor on the other viewed the city as a twenty million dollar "gigantic stock company." For the ratepayers who constituted the stockholders, it was ludicrous that city council as the board of directors should consume so much time debating "a six foot plank sidewalk on the east side of steenth street from Beautiful avenue to Black Stump lane." A general manager should handle the details and, on the basis of regular supervisors' reports, issue monthly statements to council to permit sensible policy decisions.³⁷

Nevertheless, in November Alderman Griebach made a surprising suggestion in the form of a by-law to raise the number of aldermen from eight to ten. Twelve would be even better, he argued, both to lighten onerous workloads and also to permit institution of the apparently popular ward system. But if Griesbach seemed to desert his earlier elitist principles in order to counteract increasing bureaucratic power, most of his colleagues maintained theirs. Alderman Bellamy observed wryly that Griesbach's proposition would mean fifty

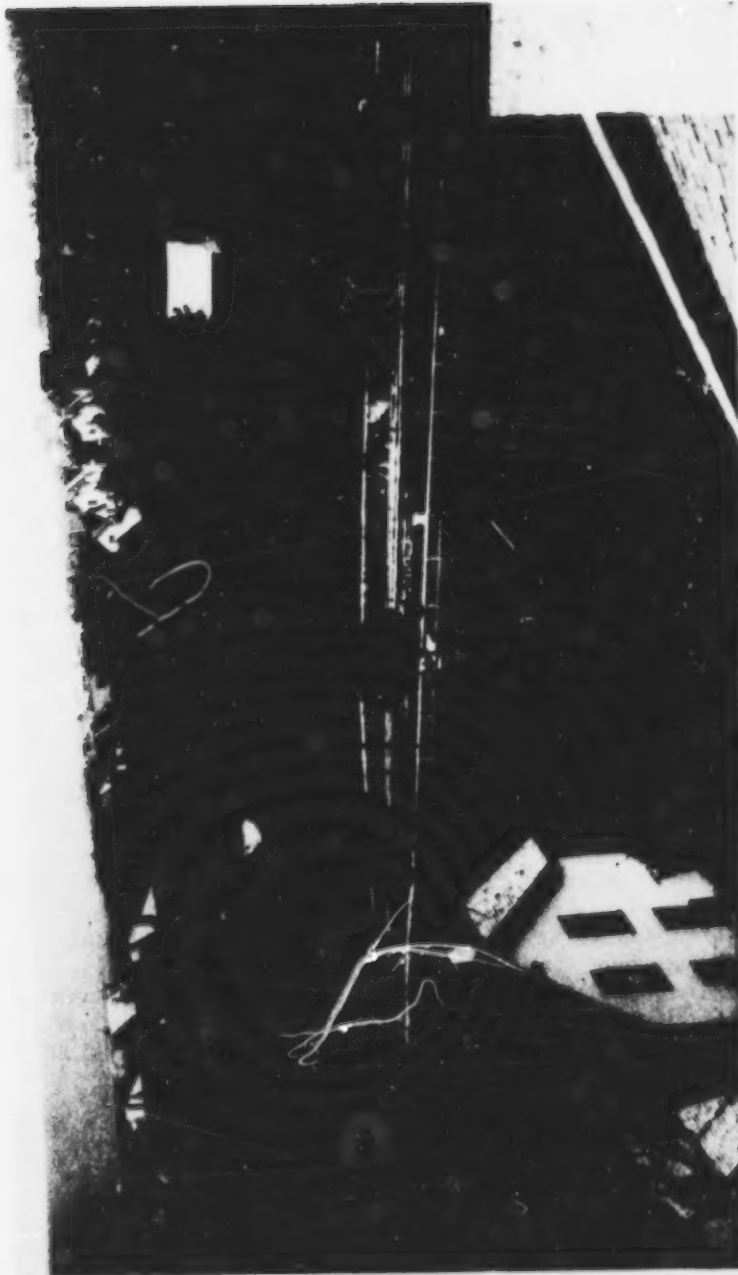
aldermen when the city reached a population of 75,000. Though Griesbach had minority support, he lost his second voluntarist alternative to a paid and expanding civil service.³⁸ The fact was that debates on the bureaucratic arrangement were resolved in 1906 in favour of the streamlined corporate approach to civic business, for the cause of council irritability—increasing work—was simultaneously the chief argument for continuation of commissioners' services.

III

The city's plunge into massive public works did not fail to stimulate some dissent which brought to the attention of civic leaders the existence of Edmonton's social diversity. Some of the outcomes of the boom and the city's corporate response briefly aggravated distinctions in the populace which were both highlighted and dissipated during the year-end municipal elections. On the surface, the strain expressed in the electoral framework was an east-west division of opinions, but there were several layers of complexity. There was some hint of a clash among ethnic groups and between the deprived and the privileged. Signs of animosity for west-enders on the part of east-enders embodied not simply business rivalries but also other frictions which would in later years be aired by labour or "populist" representatives.

In 1906, however, the form organized labour would take in Edmonton was just being hammered into shape, largely because of determined organizational work by the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress and the American Federation of Labor. Late in August travelling organizers of those two associations rallied Edmonton tradesmen and labourers in a series of meetings. They urged not only formation of new unions (there were probably not yet a dozen in Edmonton) and emphasis on the "union label," but also affiliation of the new Edmonton Trades and Labour Council (organized in December 1905) with the Trades and Labour Congress. The resulting enthusiasm carried through the ET and LC's first Labour Day program, but it proved premature to attempt collective participation in the December municipal elections. The ET and LC delegates decided against complicating further the crowded electoral scene.³⁹

Working people's concerns were therefore subsumed in the east-west controversy in the last half of 1906. That confrontation derived substantial impetus from fall railway affairs. First veteran alderman Thomas Bellamy reacted with heated animosity to the city's detailed agreement with the GTP in which, among other things, he foresaw problems of citizen access to established east-end streets across which the GTP would be permitted to build. West-enders like Griesbach displayed benign complacency during Bellamy's onslaught,⁴⁰ but the



Courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta

VIEW OF WEST END RESIDENTIAL AREA, 1906.

tables were neatly turned a few weeks later when it came time to consider the simple request from the CPR for permission to cross several streets on the level from the north end of the proposed high level bridge. These were in the middle of the fashionable west-end residential area.

During the debate of this proposition over the next three months, the Board of Trade was very clear about its recommendations: to force the CPR to cross in the east rather than the west end, a solution condemned by one alderman as blatantly "saving west end property at the deliberate expense of east end property." Not only Board spokesman William Short, but also the leader of a bitter west-end committee of ratepayers, prominent merchant and ex-Mayor John A. McDougall, delved deep into Edmonton business hostility toward the CPR. If the location was not to be moved, then Short, the Board of Trade, and Alderman Griesbach, among others, looked for "an abatement of nuisances" and some way to avoid cutting main streets "to the detriment of the established interests." At the very least, west-enders looked for a complex combination of subway and overhead bypasses, no use of whistles or bells in the vicinity, and the search for "smokeless coal" or "other inoffensive motive power."⁴¹ It would be a long time yet before the details were settled. For the time being one cannot help noticing that east-enders—even those many with long residence and memory in Edmonton—saw no comparable need to refer to old CPR wounds in discussion of the high level bridge location.

They were far less sanguine about the council's selection of a site for the proposed isolation hospital. No sooner had it been made than an east-end property owner objected that he did not want a "pest house" so near the lots he owned. A yard-long east-end petition which followed succeeded in postponing the decision, but other resentments accumulated. A vitriolic letter to the editor of the *Bulletin* in August decried the arrogant assumption of residential superiority in the west end and condemned efforts to move the CPR bridge to the east end. The writer was not the first to recommend an east-end rather than the chosen west-end location for the planned parliament buildings. In November, F. W. Brown, proprietor of the Hub Cigar Store, fostered the notion of a straight east-end aldermanic ticket and listed the year's grievances in vehement style. "If I had my way," he told a *Bulletin* interviewer, "not a man west of First street would go into next year's council, and this business of beautifying the west end with lovely boulevards and elegant drives while labor is too scarce to comply with the hundreds of applications for street connections by east enders should stop." He deplored plans for the expensive new sewer project which seemed to him to place ninety percent of new lateral lines west of First street, and he had similar ideas on the planned streetcar line and

paving. He was outraged that the garbage incinerator was slated for construction "right in the middle of the residential section of the east end":

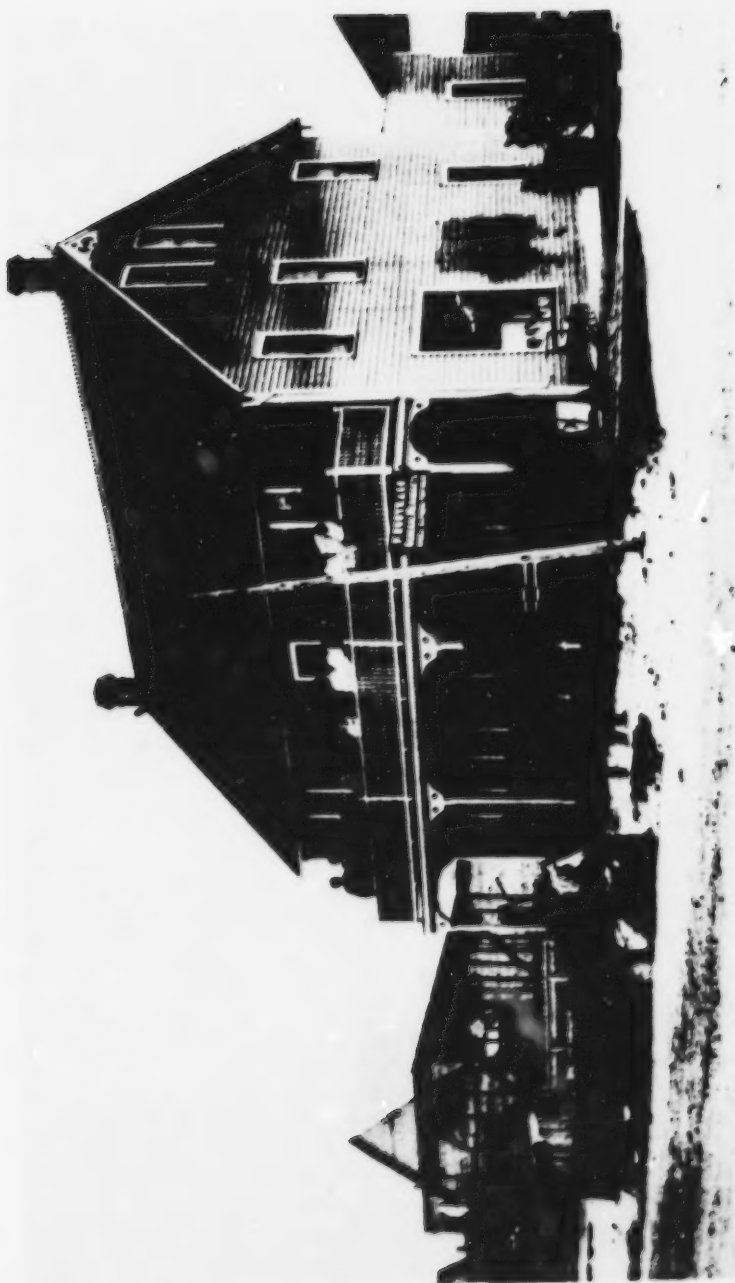
They tell us that this garbage doesn't smell; that the plant will be a nice place—in fact an ornament. All right. Then we will locate the plant somewhere along McKay or Victoria. I think about a block from the new parliament buildings would suit.⁴²

Large and boisterous public meetings in the east-end were followed by petitions against the incinerator location and for water connections to the populous north part of east Edmonton, protesting against ongoing construction of blocks of pipe in parts of the west-end where there were no residents at all. Another meeting chaired by Brown to select east-end aldermanic candidates was hugely attended, allowing organizers to envision a central committee of no fewer than 100 to direct a canvasser for every block in the city. The keynote of the east end was expressed by candidate Thomas Daly, who "said that he had no particular grievance against the present council except that they were very dirty housekeepers and that they swept a great deal of dirt into the east end." A fellow candidate, Dr. W. McCauley, attacked another east end concern with his own calculation that there had been at least 500 cases of typhoid in the city during the summer and thirty-five to forty deaths as a consequence.⁴³

Other points of discussion—such as the general problem of coping with utilities expansion—did arise, but the basic east-west contest was underlined by the election results. Conveniently for analysis, there were two polling stations, one in the east end, one in the west end. Three of the five east-end aldermanic candidates were successful, and the other two placed sixth (Koermann) and seventh in the field of fourteen competing for five seats. Their success was clearly a function of their championing east-end causes: nearly eighty percent of their support came at the east-end poll. By contrast, the other two successful candidates, James B. Walker and Wilfrid Gariepy, drew two-thirds of their votes from the west-end poll.⁴⁴ Despite the absence of ward representation in the Edmonton charter, a division of outlook was thus both expressed and contained in the framework of the municipal election.

IV

City councils are by definition charged with community development, but many voluntary associations available to Edmontonians were important, if unwitting, urban community agencies. Most church, fraternal, ethnic, political, professional or elite groups would not have described their purposes in terms of promoting the urban entity of which they were a part, but some of them were



PAUL RUDYK COMPANY STORE, EAST END EDMONTON, c. 1906.

Courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta

undergoing urban transformations and others hardly made sense except in the urban context. Some provided communal comfort, or identity, within the larger urban confusion. Some helped to define the urban elite. Most involved strong links with other similar groups in other places, strengthening the standardization of Canadian and North American life even as they discouraged deviation from the norm within the Edmonton community. Some had the effect of easing the transition from alien lifestyles, and a few beginning but important organizations were formed especially to provide certain services for the community at large.

The demand for pure fraternity, for carving out a smaller yet related social identity, could not be expected to decline while the city expanded. The clubs of ritual rather than service proliferated and grew, age-old Masonic orders and the Oddfellows joined by the brand new orders of Elks and Eagles, all sharing the artificial attempt at exclusivity so apparent in the name of one lesser lodge, the Canadian Order of Chosen Friends. Despite the Canadian content in some of their titles, almost all were extensions of a North American phenomenon. The most recently acquired fraternity, the Canadian Benevolent Order of Elks, owed its Edmonton origin in November to the efforts of a travelling organizer; the Canadian branch was itself a late appendage of a gigantic American organization begun in New York not forty years earlier. The continuing popularity of fraternities was demonstrated by an initial membership list of 280 young Elks in Edmonton, average age twenty-eight, the largest Canadian chapter outside Toronto. Another example of strength, the Friendship Lodge of the Independent Order of Oddfellows, showed a membership of 110 and growing, enough to justify following the Masonic and Orange Lodges in the construction of their own hall. Their national and international dimensions were manifest, just as for other lodges, in their participation in provincial, national and international Grand Lodges.⁴⁵

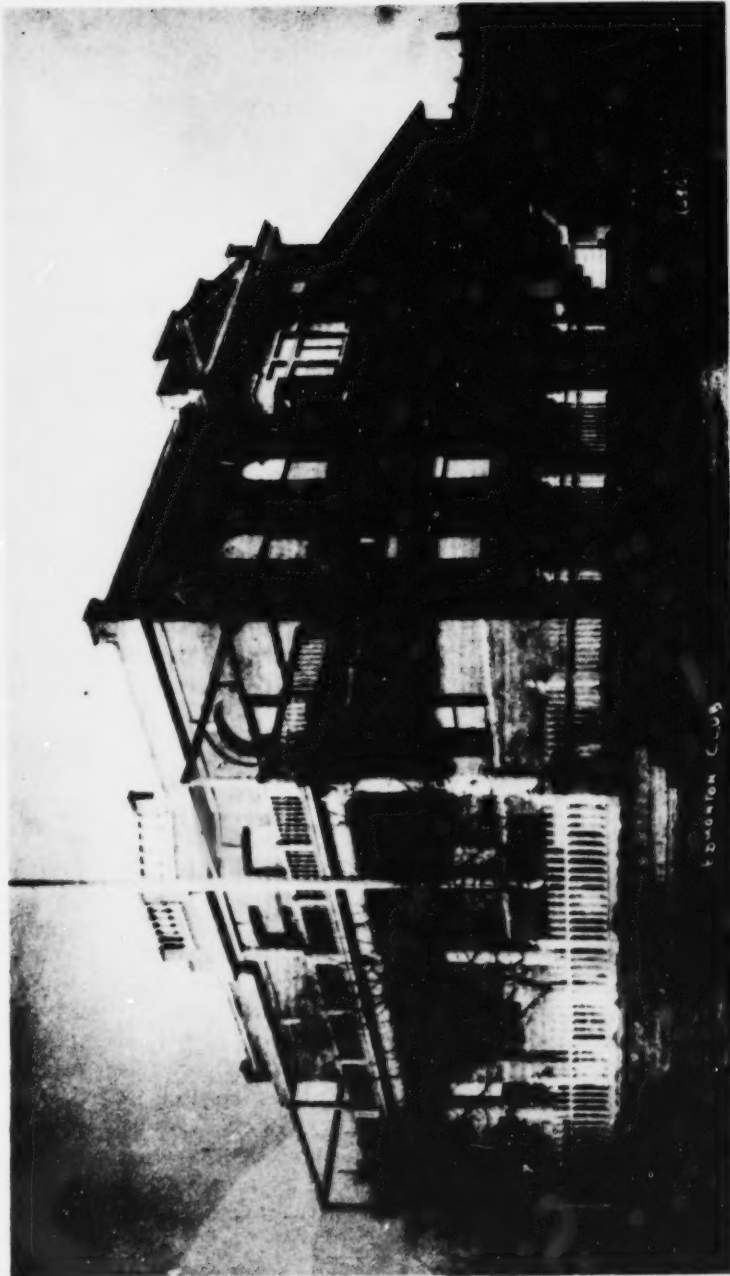
All the major church denominations (Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic and Baptist) had developed men's, women's and young people's societies, of which several had advanced beyond purely religious worship and fellowship. The Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist men's and youth groups in particular often met to debate issues of local or national community interest. Entertainment encompassed musical concerts, skating parties, lawn socials and mass organization of the game known as "progressive pedro." In an expanding community, social intercourse was recognized to have value for welcoming strangers. Anglicans showed the broadest community outlook, providing a "Willing Workers Mission Band" to play for 1,000 revellers at Edmonton's annual fancy dress costume skating

carnival at Thistle Rink, and at Christmas time sponsoring a program in south side Ross Hall filled with secular items like "Santa Claus and the Mouse" and a "May Pole Drill." Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist congregations supported rather military Boys' Brigades.⁴⁶ Despite congregational differences of emphasis, all were equally energetic and undoubtedly contributed a hefty share of Edmonton's community social activities.

The east end was the usual location for an entirely different religious manifestation: the revival meeting. While the Methodist Rev. C. H. Huestis detected a demand early in the year when he conducted a series of evening "special revival meetings" himself, the regular denominations were not normally involved. A Free Methodist missionary, the Rev. Oscar L. King, fitted the pattern better. He began early in the year in private homes, then briefly borrowed the facilities of the German Baptist Church, then in late spring pitched his Gospel Tent at the corner of east-end Syndicate and Clara streets. There he addressed decidedly personal rather than community subjects: one was "Hell—Where it is; What it is; and Who goes there." Without exactly becoming widespread, the phenomenon showed signs of developing into a distinctive urban occurrence.⁴⁷ Without too much stretch of the imagination, these services can be seen as appeals to discontented souls with messages of basic truths designed to set them at rest. As such, they had palliative urban social significance.

At the other end of the scale was the Edmonton Club, by 1906 beginning to overshadow the older bastion of the pioneers, the Old Timers' Association. Formed in 1899 by fifty-four charter members, the Edmonton Club claimed a membership of about 130 in 1906, enough to enable construction of a spacious new clubhouse. Membership depended upon sponsorship and acceptance by club members coupled with substantial entrance and continuing subscription fees. That it was purely an elite social club of the city, meant to transcend other divisions, was driven home by the very first article of the constitution, which forbade absolutely not only projects but (even mere) discussions of political or religious import. The Edmonton Club included very few Strathconans. The first session of the Alberta legislature provided an alternative, a charter for a Strathcona Club, but only desultory consideration of this possibility took place in November.⁴⁸

Most of the professional men brought together in the Edmonton Club were simultaneously involved energetically in an expanding range of professional societies—legal, medical, pharmaceutical, architectural and veterinarian. Their purpose was of course primarily self-regulatory, as it was also for the Edmonton District Retail Merchants' Association, an effort to cope collectively with their



Courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta

EDMONTON CLUB, 1907

economic and technical problems and to maintain prominent economic and social status. Occasionally their collective expertise was useful to the city, as when the Northern Alberta Medical Association was consulted on the question of a proper isolation hospital.⁴⁹ All these organizations did more than merely co-ordinate local specialists of a kind. Equally important, they introduced provincial, Canadian and international standardization to Edmonton practices; they helped make Edmonton life in certain respects indistinguishable from urban life elsewhere.

The collective homogenization of professional and fraternal organizations also extended to political associations. In 1906 the overwhelmingly visible provincial and federal political organization was the Liberal Party, which was firmly established in both federal and provincial governments. Quite apart from demonstrating the ease with which they could capture a Strathcona district federal by-election, the Liberals were determined to identify themselves with Edmonton in other ways. On occasion the senior Liberal Association could stage a spectacular civic event designed to impress citizens with the magnitude of the local Liberal prevalence. One took place when the local M.P. and cabinet minister, the Hon. Frank Oliver, visited his constituency in October. He was entertained at a banquet in the Thistle Rink for which nearly 500 tickets were sold. An even more active and regular community presence was established by the new Young Liberal Club, which expressly added to a political function the social one of fraternity and collective entertainment. An active membership of 185 participated in mock parliaments, debates on women's suffrage or the question of excluding the Chinese from Canada—and the recreation of a well-rehearsed male chorus. Finally, the Liberals paid careful attention to ethnic minorities, including among their officers not only French-speaking individuals but newcomers like Gustav Koermann.⁵⁰

The Liberal Party had sound political reasons for seeking east-end alien ethnic and working-class support, but acculturation for the servant girls, labourers and working-class families of German and Ukrainian descent was promoted by some of their own apparently isolated institutions. Two German Lutheran congregations, one German Baptist church and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic St. Josaphat's church all provided a social buffer against the strangeness of local practices and thus eased the transition. St. John's Lutheran Church early accepted the assimilative implications of splitting its congregation into two for Sunday services in both English and German. Of the new immigrant secular clubs mentioned earlier, the German Club Edelweiss, with its new hall under construction at east end Kinistino Street and its German entertainment flavour, was the most prominent.⁵¹



Courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta

ST. JOSAPHAT'S UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH, EAST END EDMONTON, 1908.

Would not this alien cluster point in the city retard rather than promote civic unity? Not likely. For Edmonton in 1906 it is perhaps not easy to prove absolutely the validity of American urban historian Blake McKelvey's perceptive insights on the role of urban ghettos as assimilative agencies for "self-conscious minorities," but a glance at the activities of all Edmonton's "old country" clubs (most from Great Britain) reveals only the mildest social identification with points of origin. In fact, there is little doubt that they could only have eased whatever social or psychological adjustments were necessary by providing a few of the familiar features of old in the new place. The United Irishmen celebrated St. Patrick's Day. "Lodge Edmonton" of the Sons of England was simply a fraternal order to which membership was restricted by the qualification of a member's birth or his parents' birth in England. The Braemar Circle, the St. Andrew's Society, and the Caledonian Society all specialized in bagpipe entertainment, Highland flings, and Scottish reels. Innocent traditional amusements were coupled with occasional gestures of commitment to the larger Edmonton community. The St. Andrew's Society Robbie Burns banquet was attended by the Lieutenant-Governor, provincial cabinet ministers and MLAs as well as civic leaders, and toasts were traded with the "sister societies" of St. Jean Baptiste and the Sons of England.⁵²

The Independent Order of Daughters of the Empire displayed an additional dimension still somewhat rare in the new city. The "Westward Ho!" and "Beaver House" chapters formed in Edmonton in 1906 undertook duties "Imperial, Patriotic and Philanthropic." Over and above their promotion of an imperial sisterhood, two of their projects provided significant community services. The "Westward Ho!" chapter sponsored a spring "Bal Poudre" and solicited donations throughout the year to purchase an ambulance for the city. "Beaver House" chapter developed a scheme which would both promote desirable immigration and fill an upper-class demand: to bring "domestic servants from the motherland" who would remain in service six months at low wages less deductions until their transatlantic fares were repaid to their employers. Other family members were expected to be drawn over with them.⁵³

Church members had gone further than social clubs into community service. Two institutions stand out: Alberta College and a branch of the Young Men's Christian Association. In this short period preceding the opening of the University of Alberta, the Alberta College of the Methodist Church enjoyed its greatest impact on the community. Its annual enrolment of more than 300 students studied high school matriculation, commercial, and university courses (the last in affiliation with McGill University). Its profile in the Edmonton

community was enhanced by part-time evening courses in secretarial skills, music and elocution, and by the exploits of its football and hockey teams. The official opening of a new school year in November drew more than 300 onlookers, including the Premier, the Lieutenant-Governor and the mayor.⁵⁴

No other voluntary organization was as significant to the new urbanism as the Young Men's Christian Association. Symbolically, it was in 1904, the year of city incorporation, that Edmonton organizers (a decidedly elite group) resolved to replace the Edmonton Young Men's Institute, so dependent for its sports and instructional facets on voluntary work, with the highly-structured YMCA employing paid staff members. The first to be hired was an executive secretary, R. B. Chadwick, lured in 1906 from a similar position in Belleville, Ontario. Chadwick soon whipped up a large and successful building campaign and recommended further staff additions to develop Edmonton men "mentally, morally and physically" with the help of religious, education, physical, information, employment and relief departments.⁵⁵

During the same year the temperance work of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and like societies took a temporary back seat to the boom-stimulated organization of the YMCA. There had been a shift in Protestant interdenominational energies, one in which prominent laymen of various congregations were far more vitally involved than they had ever been in prohibitionist crusades. Alberta College and the YMCA were inspired not so much by religious considerations as by perceived needs in the development of the city. Similarly, when the Alberta Methodist Conference announced in June its willingness to consider union with other denominations, a *Bulletin* editorial made just two intriguing points: first, that unique western friendliness among denominations for practical reasons favoured such a move; second, that the "primal purpose" would be "that *society* should receive the moral uplift which is the real purpose and mission of all churches."⁵⁶ No theological argument here, nor any concern for individual salvation. The urban organism was exerting its collectivizing influence on the nature of church as well as secular associations.

V

Edmontonians and Strathconans were entertained, if not en masse, at least in substantial masses already in 1906, and for a startling proportion of their entertainment they were passive spectators. Without denying the continuation of private recreational activity, it is obvious that the organized variety boomed. Some of it was in the traditional and more active forms of skating carnivals, dances and

picnics. Fancy dress skating carnivals in particular attracted up to 1,000 participants. So also did special entertainments planned for holidays. One fitting celebration in this year of railway bonanza was a train trip for 1,200 ticket purchasers to Fort Saskatchewan sporting events and dancing on Victoria Day. Dominion Day, a national event, was submerged in the attractions of the Edmonton Fair, a local extravaganza running four days at the beginning of July. It is likely that businessmen saw the fair's value principally in financial terms. The Exhibition Association directors eagerly anticipated 20,000 attendance, many to be brought to the city by special trains from points as much as a hundred miles away. There were, however, other aspects to it. A *Bulletin* editorial hoped for a successful fair as an advertisement of collective civic and agrarian vitality, and the shopkeepers themselves interrupted their bursting business opportunities for a day at the height of the fair in order to attend. It served as a focus, a symbol of collective effort and, especially, success.⁵⁷

The herd characteristic taking over Edmonton entertainment was even more evident in regular week-to-week offerings in Edmonton's halls, theatres, rinks and playing fields. Very little of the fantasy which Edmontonians paid to take in was provided within their own ranks, even as early as 1906. The few musical variety concerts and fewer amateur theatrical presentations offered by local talent were almost unnoticeable amidst the professionals touring through the city. The Thistle Rink (an arena fitted for theatre), Robertson's Hall before fire consumed it, Ross Hall on the south side, the Empire Theatre built in June, and the Edmonton Opera House after its October opening, all carried well-attended entertainments of decided mediocrity.

There were some exceptions. The serious French Canadian prima donna referred to consistently as "Madame Albani" carried such a reputation and was given such a promotional build-up that the capacity audiences may have come more for the spectacle of celebrity than for her singing. A slightly different example was the touring Harold Nelson Stock Company which mixed popular and lavishly-produced light theatre like *The Virginian*, *David Garrick's Love* and *The Prisoner of Zenda* with Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. Nevertheless, the company's leading man, Harold Nelson, who was invariably its main attraction to the crowds of people who attended, soon complained that the popularity of Shakespearean drama had almost disappeared in the face of the demand for visual spectacles associated with the less sophisticated plays.⁵⁸

The rest of Edmonton's theatrical fare made little pretence at cultural elevation. Stock companies showing off melodramas like *The Convict's Daughter*, *A Foxy Tramp*, *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Irish Boarder* were merely "merry makers," and musical productions were

mainly proven American hit comedies. One company, the Roscian Opera Company, did supplement its fare of recognized operettas, including those of Gilbert and Sullivan, with the operas *Martha* and *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Despite these rarities, the greatest plaudits seemed reserved for the Juvenile Bostonians who produced "the 'excruciatingly funny cannibalistic' musical comedy 'Gee Whiz'"; or Pollard's Lilliputian Opera Company. Some of the specialty groups must have seemed incongruous in this northern setting, with minstrel shows featuring "the latest coon ditties," "the Zulu travesty 'A Dream of Dahomey,'" or endless variations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.⁵⁹ Some of these groups verged on vaudeville variety shows, alleviating their major features with the contortions of jugglers, unicyclists and Siberian bloodhounds.

One vaudeville troupe, announced the *Bulletin* with relish, presented "no pathos or seriousness anywhere to interrupt the stream of mirth" and did "not aspire to ethics or classics, [taught] no moral lesson, and [did] not attempt to be instructive." Exactly. Edmonton was solidly and happily plugged in to the homogeneous North American phenomenon of travelling fantasy and comic entertainment. The first, though temporarily unsuccessful, attempt at opening a theatre (the Empire) for four daily performance of "refined vaudeville" in June was a sign of things to come. The Edmonton Opera House was built in the fall for a steady diet of variety theatre, supplemented in afternoons by roller skating. A prairie Managers' Association was being promoted from Calgary to co-ordinate prairie bookings for North American touring companies, to create a Canadian prairie "circuit," so to speak.⁶⁰ The enlivening of hundreds of urban lives nightly had become another business specialty, a service performed for an urban population rather than by themselves, and standard marketing procedure to satisfy the broadest taste promised little fundamental variety or quality. The new urban entertainment was in its standardization of fantasy both a communal force and a communal sign.

Sports entertainment was following a similar pattern, but with the added dimension of competition which led to representative teams for the city. Sports clubs proliferated in the city, launched at first simply for organization of local competition in hockey (men's and women's), cricket, curling, football, lacrosse, baseball, rifle marksmanship and tennis. In most of those sports, however, organization had already transcended local competitions to support civic representative teams carrying the colours of Edmonton or Strathcona into inter-urban contests. The Edmonton Curling Club bonspiel late in January drew more outsiders than members of the Edmonton and Strathcona curling clubs. The Edmonton and Strathcona Rifle Associations,

whose members normally occupied themselves with an endless series of shooting practices, combined in June and July to place well in the eighty-team Canadian Military Rifle matches. The Edmonton Cricket Club had perhaps proceeded the least distance to external competition in team sports, yet games between teams of married and bachelor members on Good Friday and Arbour Day were matched by games with Wetaskiwin, Fort Saskatchewan and Red Deer, while Edmonton organizers tried to establish a North-West Cricket League for Alberta and Saskatchewan.⁶¹ Both Edmonton and Strathcona as well as Alberta College had lacrosse and football clubs with teams playing at the intermediate and senior levels, and a crack Strathcona lacrosse team was judged worthy to be sent on a B.C. tour promoting Strathcona. But of the team sports, hockey and baseball organization illustrated the trend best.

Hockey organization was not much more complex than that for football or lacrosse, but the range of external challenge exhibition games was greater. For regular local performance, representatives of high school, Alberta College, Printers and the Edmonton Thistle and Strathcona Shamrock intermediate teams organized a city hockey league. Senior Thistle and Shamrock teams for the most part played each other before capacity crowds of around 2,000 spectators. The Thistles fittingly in this year consistently thrashed their counterparts for a trophy known as the Paterson Cup. A Rossland, B.C. team visited to play several games; the obverse of this was a Thistle tour through Calgary, Medicine Hat, Regina, Moose Jaw, Portage la Prairie, Brandon and Winnipeg. Although regular league play was not thought feasible, frequent games before good crowds established hockey as a major recreational spectacle in early Edmonton. Games against outside teams received extensive front-page newspaper coverage, stressing the identification of Edmonton readers with their representative teams even as players began to be imported from as far afield as Quebec.⁶²

Baseball was the most vigorously promoted and businesslike spectator sport, drawing 1,200 and more to "witness the tragedy" of repeated losses to the major Calgary rival. In a tournament which took place during the Edmonton fair, the potential for the game in Edmonton was demonstrated by the attendance of 1,500 at a final game in which the Edmonton team did not play. A game against a team from Anacortes, Washington drew a similar crowd. During the spring campaign to form and fund an athletic association to promote and secure facilities for summer sports, the *Bulletin* remarked, "If there is anything that brings into prominence a town or city it is a victorious lacrosse, baseball or football team." As soon as it thus became a matter of finding the best to represent the city, it became necessary to



Courtesy of Provincial Archives of Alberta

EDMONTON FAIR, JULY 1905.

transform the organization into a professional and commercial one. Shareholders were quickly found for an athletic company which was first and foremost a baseball club. American players were imported. Bleachers were installed, grounds improved, fences built and tickets sold at the baseball diamond. Bitter complaints were registered when paid players committed too many errors. New players were brought in to replace them. After the 1906 season Edmonton promoters journeyed to other centres to draw them into a Western Canada League which applied for and received the sanction of the American co-ordinating board for professional baseball leagues.⁶¹

Somewhat as for theatrical entertainment, but not quite at the same pace, the organization of Edmonton sports entertainment was becoming a specialized international service for passive consumers on a mass scale. Challenge matches mixing local and touring participants in boxing and wrestling exerted a similar appeal, presumably with the added attraction of laying bets on the outcome. The ultimate gambling sport, horse racing, was the most popular feature of the Edmonton fair. In the fall, Edmonton's first "Driving Club" prepared to campaign for funds to build a sophisticated racing speedway.⁶² Sports contests and theatrical entertainment displayed the crowd formation of Edmonton behaviour as nothing else could. Here was not independent, let alone unique, initiative: here was transplantation of urban forms into a new setting, the reproduction of an organism.

To put it another way, there was no doubt that Edmonton was a city in 1906, as its promoters so devoutly wished to ensure. Its lack of distinction from other cities, the collective behaviour of its humanity, and its commitment to community all betrayed its urbanity. The individuals and the groups within the city who organized themselves to provide certain collective services simultaneously committed themselves to the form of total urban community which would permit only limited modification. Independent behaviour had been sacrificed in many fields; in taking the collective approach citizens made the city the unit governing much of their individual conduct: not only in their work, but also in their accommodation and utilities, in provision of health care and education, even in their voluntary associations and in their entertainment. Between citizens and city, which now served which?

NOTES

- ¹ Leo Schriener, "The City as a Social Organism," *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, Vol. 1 (1966), pp. 58-69.
- ² John Taylor, "The Urban West, Public Welfare, and a Theory of Urban Development," in A. R. McCormack and Ian MacPherson, eds., *Cities in the West* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1975), pp. 288-90.
- ³ Canada, Sessional Paper No. 17 (a), 6-7 Edward VII, 1907, *Census of Population and Agriculture of the Northwest Provinces - 1906* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1907), pp. 70, 77, 101, *Henderson's Manitoba and North West Territories Gazetteer and Directory* (1906) for Edmonton (pp. 459-540) and Strathcona (pp. 1117-23).
- ⁴ I. D. Regatta, *The Canadian Northern Railway: Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies, 1895-1918* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976), pp. 69-71, 107-23, 164-69, 245; R. A. Christenson, "The Calgary and Edmonton Railway and the *Edmonton Bulletin*," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1967), pp. 152-56, 160-62, 218-23, 236-49; *Edmonton Journal* (EJ), January 2, 23, June 19, 1906; *Edmonton Bulletin* (EB), February 2, 6, 7, June 29, 30, 1906.
- ⁵ The Edmonton newspapers were studied with the good news all year long. See also *The Labour Gazette* (Ottawa, Department of Labour), Vol. 7, No. 6 (December 1906), p. 632 and No. 7 (January 1907), pp. 746-47; R. G. Ironside and S. A. Hamilton, "Historical Geography of Coal Mining in the Edmonton District," *Alberta Historical Review*, Vol. 20 (Summer 1972), pp. 10-11.
- ⁶ E. G. Thomas, *The Liberal Party in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), pp. 34-41, 50; Morris Zaslow, *The Opening of the Canadian North, 1870-1914* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), pp. 210-11; John F. Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona 1891-1912," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1978), pp. 119-20; Gilpin, "Failed Metropolis," Chapter ten in this volume, and Bruce Kilpatrick, "A Lesson in Boosterism: The Provincial Capital Controversy in Alberta, 1904-1906," *Urban History Review*, Vol. VIII (February 1980), pp. 47-109.
- ⁷ E. J. Hart, "The History of the French-Speaking Community of Edmonton, 1795-1935," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1971), pp. 59-64; Elizabeth B. Gerwin, "A Survey of the German-Speaking Population of Alberta," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1938), pp. 109-10; *Henderson's Edmonton and Strathcona Directories for 1906* (survey of ethnic names); Ron Seng Hoe, *Structural Changes of Two Chinese Communities in Alberta, Canada* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1976), pp. 74-75, 291; EB, February 27, March 9, 7, 10, 24, May 1, June 5, 1906.
- ⁸ Michael H. Marunchak, *The Ukrainian Canadians: A History* (Winnipeg and Ottawa: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1970), pp. 63-67, 102, 151-52, 167-69; J. Skwarok, *The Ukrainian Settlers in Canada and Their Schools, 1891-1921* (Edmonton: Basilian Press of Toronto, 1958), pp. 24-27, 32; EB, March 10, 1906.
- ⁹ Sad Bursten, "Edmonton: A Jewish Community in Perspective," *The Jewish Post* (March 3, 1966), p. 16; Tony Cashman, *Abraham Crisall: The Story of a Simple Man* (1963), pp. 10-18; Taped interview with Hyman Goldstick by David Nelson, May 30 and June 5, 1973, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton (PAA).
- ¹⁰ Hart, "The History of the French-Speaking Community," pp. 52-77, 102-04.
- ¹¹ *Henderson's Edmonton and Strathcona Directories for 1906* were numerically analyzed for occupational distribution according to residential area (addresses are available for Edmonton but not for the much smaller Strathcona) and, in a rough way (by reference to names), for ethnic distribution according to residential area.
- ¹² I am following E. Digby Baltzell's distinction in *Philadelphia Gentlemen* (N.Y.: The Free Press, 1958) between upper class and elite, the latter involving exclusivity based on acceptance by members. None of my keys is likely to unlock the door to Edmonton's elite perfectly, but they give sufficient indication of its embryo existence and its distinction from the bulk of the population for what follows.
- ¹³ Statistical generalizations are based on analysis of data available for Edmonton names in the following sources: John Blue, *Alberta: Past and Present*, Vols. 2 and 3 (Chicago: Pioneer Publishing Company, 1924); Henry J. Boam, comp., *The Prairie Provinces of Canada* (London: Selin Ltd., 1914); A. O. Macrae, *History of the Province of Alberta*, 2 vols. (The Western Canada History Company, 1912); *Men and Makers of Edmonton, Alberta* (Edmonton: Keystone Press, 1913).
- ¹⁴ The microfimed copy of *The Saturday News* held at PAA is missing issues between May 19 and September 13, 1906. It was edited by the former editor of the Woodstock (Ontario) *Sentinel-Review*, A. Balmer Watt, who would later transfer to the *Edmonton Journal*. The women's section was written by the editor's wife.
- ¹⁵ The following generalizations are based on the membership list to 1906 in *The Edmonton Club: Act of Incorporation, Constitution, Regulations and List of Members* (Edmonton: Keystone Press, 1913).
- ¹⁶ EB, August 18, November 24, 1906. For Canadian interest in the single tax, see Alan F. J. Artibise, "Boosterism and the Development of Prairie Cities, 1871-1913," Chapter eight in

- this volume, and Ramsay Cook, "Henry George and the Poverty of Canadian Progress," *CHA Historical Papers* (1977), pp. 143-56.
- ¹⁹ *EJ*, May 9, 1906; *EB*, June 2, 12, 13, 20, 29, August 11, 16, November 10, 12, 15, 1906; F. H. Dale, "The Role of the City Council in the Economic and Social Development of Edmonton, Alberta, 1892 to 1906," Ph.D. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1969), pp. 58-61.
- ²⁰ Dale, "The Role of the City Council," p. 80; *EB*, January 3, 20, 24, February 22, March 8, April 6, 9, 14, 25-28, May 23, June 6, 29, August 11, 16, 1906.
- ²¹ Dale, "The Role of the City Council," pp. 66-70; *EB*, January 3, February 21, March 8, 9, 14, 31, June 6, 13, 22, July 11, August 20, November 15, December 1, 19, 1906.
- ²² Dale, "The Role of the City Council," pp. 84-89; *EJ*, January 17, 1906; *EB*, January 19, 24, March 8, 9, 14, September 22, October 19, 20, November 7, December 15, 18, 1906.
- ²³ Dale, "The Role of the City Council," pp. 120-24; *EB*, February 1, March 14, April 14, June 29, August 9, 16, 18, 1906.
- ²⁴ See John C. Weaver, "Edmonton's Perilous Course, 1909-1929," *Urban History Review*, No. 2, 77 (October 1977); Artibise, "Boosterism"; and Dale, "The Role of the City Council."
- ²⁵ *EJ*, January 11, 1906; *EB*, January 3, 10, 24, 27, 30, February 14, April 28, May 2, June 6, 13, 14, 26-29, July 25, August 16, September 19, 22, 26, December 19, 1906.
- ²⁶ Strathcona Council Minutes, January 2, February 6, 20, March 20, April 13, July 10, 24, October 16, November 6, 1906; Edmonton City Archives (ECA); *EB*, January 3, 16, 24, March 23, June 23, 29, July 6, August 25, September 4, 8, December 27, 1906; Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona," p. 74; Taylor, "The Urban West," pp. 294-98.
- ²⁷ *EB*, January 5, 18, March 9, April 14, August 27, October 12, November 24, 1906; *EJ*, July 2, 1906; Tony Cashman, *Edmonton's Catholic Schools* (Edmonton: Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 7, 1977), pp. 48-49.
- ²⁸ Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona," p. 135; Minutes, Grand Trunk Pacific (GTP) Directors' meetings, November 8, 1906 and February 7, 1907; Public Archives of Canada (PAC), CNR Papers, RG 30, vol. 1104, pp. 269, 299; Dale, "The Role of the City Council," p. 32; *EB*, February 3, 7, 13, March 10, 28, April 6, 11, 14, 19, June 30, July 11, September 8, November 7, 13, 21, 1906; *EJ*, December 6, 1906.
- ²⁹ Strathcona Council Minutes, October 30, 1906; ECA; *EB*, February 3, 15, March 28, September 11, 1906.
- ³⁰ Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona," pp. 108-9, 121-30; GTP Directors' meeting, February 1, 1906, p. 179; PAC.
- ³¹ Strathcona Council Minutes, January 20, March 14, May 30, June 4, July 3, 1906; ECA; Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona," pp. 26-27.
- ³² This paragraph and the following one are drawn from Strathcona Council Minutes, April 17, June 19, September 4, 27, October 16, 23, November 6, 20, 27, 1906; ECA; *EB*, January 2, February 3, 26, April 11, May 3, 7, June 13, 21, 1906; Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona," pp. 140-41.
- ³³ Strathcona Council Minutes, November 21, December 29, 1905, January 3, 16, February 6, March 12, April 3, 9, 17, May 15, June 4, July 6, 17, 1906; ECA; Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona," pp. 70-71, 75; *EB*, March 12, April 9, 11, June 28, 1906.
- ³⁴ Gilpin, "The City of Strathcona," pp. 139-40; Strathcona Council Minutes, September 11, 18, 1906; ECA.
- ³⁵ Dale, "The Role of the City Council," p. 80; Strathcona Council Minutes, June 19, October 16, November 6, December 28, 1906; ECA; *EB*, April 28, November 7, 13, December 8, 27, 29, 1906.
- ³⁶ Weaver, "Edmonton's Perilous Course," pp. 21, 23; Artibise, "Boosterism"; Dale, "The Role of the City Council," p. 104; J. D. Anderson, "The Municipal Government Reform Movement in Western Canada 1880-1920," in Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, eds., *The Usable Urban Past: Planning and Politics in the Modern Canadian City* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 73-111; *EB*, August 14, 1906.
- ³⁷ *EB*, December 8, 1905, February 28, March 8, 9, 24, 31, 1906.
- ³⁸ *EB*, March 30, April 5, 19, May 12, 25, 28, June 6, 13, 14, 20, 21, September 19, 1906.
- ³⁹ *EB*, March 7, April 21, May 3, December 3, 1906.
- ⁴⁰ *EB*, November 7, 15, 1906.
- ⁴¹ *EB*, August 21, 27, 28, September 1, 4, November 27, 1906; *Alberta Labor News* supplement *Labor Annual*, September 3, 1921, p. 41; Monthly issues of *Labor Gazette*, Vols. 6 and 7, February, 1906; February, 1907; W. R. Askin, "Labor Unrest in Edmonton and District and its Coverage by the Edmonton Press, 1918-1919," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1973), pp. 6-7; W. J. C. Cherwinski, "Organized Labour in Saskatchewan: The FLC Years, 1905-1945," Ph.D. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1972), pp. 11-13; Robert Babcock *Gompers in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), pp. 51-53.
- ⁴² *EB*, August 18, 25, 1906.
- ⁴³ *EB*, September 1, 4, 8, 10, 11, November 5, 14, 1906.
- ⁴⁴ *EB*, January 3, April 28, May 2, June 6, 13, 14, 26, 27, 29, July 25, August 16, 25, November 9, 1906.

- ⁴¹ *EB*, November 14, 17, 20, 30, December 6, 8, 1906; *EJ*, December 11, 13, 1906.
- ⁴² *EJ*, December 6, 10, 11, 1906; *EB*, December 6, 11, 15, 1906.
- ⁴³ *EJ*, January 6, 1906; *EB*, January 2, 11, February 10, March 26, August 6, 25, November 7, 12, 1906. Reports on meetings of other organizations appeared regularly in the city's newspapers.
- ⁴⁴ Frank A. Peake, "The Beginnings of the Diocese of Edmonton, 1875-1913," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1952), pp. 61-62; *EJ*, January 6, 8, 19, 1906; *EB*, January 2, 5, 11, 15, 22, 24, 29, 31, February 5, 10, 17, 23, 26, 27, March 5, 7, 12, 15, 26, 28, April 23, 25, May 9, June 18, 20, 27, 30, July 3, 13, August 25, October 6, 11, November 5, 12, 13, 19, 27, December 21, 26, 31, 1906.
- ⁴⁵ *EJ*, January 27, 1906; *EB*, January 18, 22, 27, April 23, May 1, June 12, 16, November 10, 27, 1906.
- ⁴⁶ *The Edmonton Club . . . Regulations*, pp. 3, 15, 32; *EB*, February 1, November 7, 1906.
- ⁴⁷ *EJ*, January 11, 1906; *EB*, February 2, 12, 21, March 8, 21, June 4, 5, 25, July 6, September 8, 1906.
- ⁴⁸ *EB*, January 13, 16, 18, February 5, March 14, 17, 22, April 6, 7, 9, June 15, 18, 26, 27, September 8, October 6, November 20, December 5, 1906.
- ⁴⁹ *EB*, January 16, 18, February 5, 6, April 9, 23, June 15, 18, September 8, November 20, December 5, 1906; C. C. McLaughlin, *Pioneering in Western Canada: A Story of the Baptists* (Calgary: The Author, 1939), pp. 138, 343-44; Emile J. Legal, *Short Sketches of the History of the Catholic Churches and Missions in Central Alberta* (1914), pp. 121-6. A separation of English from other names in *Henderson's Directory for Edmonton and Strathcona in 1906* confirms the description of German and Ukrainian occupational status reported in the two books cited here.
- ⁵⁰ Blake McKeel, "Cities as Nurseries of Self-conscious Minorities," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 39 (1970), pp. 367-81; *EB*, January 25, 26, February 6, March 6, 14, 16, April 4, 7, 20, June 22, December 8, 11, 15, 21, 29, 1906; *EJ*, January 6, 27, 1906.
- ⁵¹ *EB*, February 5, March 24, 30, April 14, 18, 21, June 30, September 13, November 5, 1906.
- ⁵² J. H. Riddell, *Methodism in the Middle West* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1946), pp. 271-75; George N. Emery, "Methodism on the Canadian Prairies, 1896-1914," Ph.D. Thesis (University of British Columbia, 1970), pp. 15-6, 347; *EB*, January 2, 16, February 9, 27, June 13, 19, 21, 30, November 12, 24, 1906.
- ⁵³ Typescript manuscript written from YMCA minutes, "The History of the Edmonton Young Men's Christian Association," pp. 1-8; Edmonton YMCA Papers, PAA, *EB*, January 8, 13, March 12, April 16, 27, 30, June 16, 22, August 27, November 12, 27, 1906.
- ⁵⁴ Local Edmonton and Strathcona union reports to the Alberta WCTU convention, October, 1906; WCTU Papers, Box 6, File 34, Glenbow-Alberta Institute Archives, Calgary; *EB*, January 22, 25, April 23, June 20, 1906. Evidently a "mass meeting of Methodists and Presbyterians in Edmonton" had endorsed church union already in 1904, despite the local eminence of "pronounced Presbyterian chauvinist" Rev. D. G. McQueen, later to lead dissenting Presbyterians out of church union in 1925; Emery, "Methodism," 331, 337. The italics in the quotation are added.
- ⁵⁵ *EB*, February 10, May 25, June 30, July 6, 1906.
- ⁵⁶ James Sheremata, "A Survey of Professional Entertainment and Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta Before 1914," M.A. Thesis (University of Alberta, 1970), pp. 80-82, 97-103; *EB*, May 9, October 8-13, December 26, 1906; *EJ*, May 9, 1906.
- ⁵⁷ Sheremata, "A Survey of Professional Entertainment," pp. 70-74, 86-88, 112, 142-43; *EB*, April 2-9, June 19-28, July 21, 27, August 11, 24, October 8-13, November 5, 10, 15, 30, December 31, 1906.
- ⁵⁸ *EB*, June 21, 26, November 6, 9, 12, 13, 1906; John Orrell, "Edmonton Theatres of Alexander W. Cameron," *Alberta History*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Spring 1978), pp. 1-4.
- ⁵⁹ *EB*, January 2, 22, March 9, 13, April 10, June 29, July 3, August 25, 27, September 5, 1906.
- ⁶⁰ *EB*, January 2, 3, 19, 30, February 2, 7, 14, 17, 27, March 5, 9, 13, 14, 24, November 5, 7, 13, 15, 20, December 26, 27, 1906.
- ⁶¹ *EB*, April 6, 9, 20, 23, May 24, June 13, 16, 26, 29, July 5, 7, August 4, 27, September 1, 8, 11, 12, October 11, November 5, 27, December 15, 26, 1906.
- ⁶² *EB*, June 26, July 6, August 24, 27, September 1, 4, 25, October 2, 19, 1906.



13. THE EVOLUTION OF VICTORIA'S FUNCTIONAL CHARACTER

CHARLES N. FORWARD

At a mature age of some 138 years, Victoria exhibits in 1980 a character that has been shaped by its site and situation, by historic events that changed its fortunes, and by persistent elements that grew within the urban corpus to become constituent parts of its present functional character. Among the most important functional elements are the political capital, naval base, retirement centre and tourist centre roles of Victoria, but many other roles have been performed with varying degrees of success in such areas as manufacturing, trade and commerce, finance and real estate, and ocean shipping. This study traces the origins and evolution of these functional themes and indicates how they varied in relative strength in the past, thereby altering the city's character. The approach will be to identify the elements that constitute the present character of Victoria and, one by one, pick up the thread of each theme in the past and follow it through to the present.

Victoria's Present Functional Character

Among the major cities of western Canada Victoria is quite distinctive. It shares the provincial capital function with Winnipeg, Regina, and Edmonton and a coastal location and climate with Vancouver, but beyond that the similarities are few. In physical features, obviously, it differs greatly from the relatively flat, inland prairie cities. Even compared with the mainland metropolis of Vancouver the physical differences are pronounced. Grandiose Vancouver has a broad and sweeping natural harbour backed by a massive ridge of mountains. Intimate Victoria is clustered around several small harbour areas and exhibits a human scale in its setting amid forested hills and the scenic, but more distant, Olympic and Cascade mountains of Washington.

Apart from the obvious physical contrasts, Victoria's city function differs from that of others in the West, even that of its sister provincial capitals. An analysis of its industrial structure, as indicated by percentages of the labour force in various industry categories, reveals the differences (Table I). Victoria most closely resembles

TABLE I

INDUSTRY CATEGORY LABOUR FORCE BY PERCENTAGE IN WESTERN
CANADIAN METROPOLITAN AREAS, 1971

	Victoria	Vancouver	Calgary	Edmonton	Saskatoon	Regina	Winnipeg
Primary Industries	2.96	2.89	6.88	3.74	3.73	1.90	0.77
Manufacturing Industries	8.81	16.60	11.16	11.42	9.81	9.46	18.24
Construction Industries	6.32	6.75	8.87	8.39	6.33	5.51	5.13
Transportation, Communication, Storage and Other Utilities	6.77	10.53	8.74	9.30	9.17	10.72	11.29
Wholesale Trade	2.93	6.11	5.44	5.33	5.89	4.95	6.18
Retail Trade	12.91	11.95	11.54	11.98	13.19	14.32	12.57
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	4.77	5.94	5.48	4.37	4.19	5.74	5.29
Personal Services, Accommodation and Food Services	7.99	6.92	6.43	7.45	7.38	7.24	6.38
Community Services and Services to Business Management	20.27	20.00	21.58	20.14	27.64	19.89	19.31
Public Administration and National Defence	18.81	4.71	7.05	10.43	6.87	13.85	8.20
Other Industries, Unspecified or Undefined	7.46	7.60	6.83	7.45	5.80	6.42	6.64
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Population, 1976	219,000	1,167,000	470,000	555,000	134,000	152,000	579,000

Note: Figures underlined, solid and broken, are the highest and lowest, respectively, in each industry category.

SOURCE: D. F. Putnam and R. G. Putnam, *Canada: A Regional Analysis* (Toronto: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1979), pp. 74 and 75.

Regina in population and in the significance of the provincial capital function relative to the size of the city. However, the percentage of the total labour force in public administration and national defence is highest by far in Victoria, though Regina ranks second. Not only is Victoria the provincial seat of government, it is the west coast naval base of Canada and an important base for federal marine service and research functions. In this respect, it is the Halifax of the west coast, but it lacks the scale of that city's commercial port function. The excellent, deep-water Esquimalt Harbour is the site of the naval base, while the smaller, shallower and dog-legged Victoria Harbour performs a small vessel commercial function. A small but deeper Outer Harbour has been created by a breakwater to cater to deep sea vessels. For the most part, however, Victoria's port, along with its railway, highway and ferry termini, serves its own needs more than it does those of other places. Transportation is of great importance to Victoria, but the city is not a key transportation centre for the West, as are Vancouver and Winnipeg. Hence, it is not surprising that Victoria records the lowest proportion of labour force in transportation among the seven centres.

In manufacturing, also, Victoria ranks at the bottom of the list, exceeded even by Saskatoon and Regina which are not noted as manufacturing centres. Besides its well-developed wood products industry, most of Victoria's manufacturing establishments are of a service nature, oriented to the local urban market. In fact, Victoria probably has a lower component of service manufacturing than a city of its size warrants, because its huge next door neighbour, Vancouver, is able to supply, quite competitively, many of the goods typically manufactured in a viable, independent city for its own consumption. Victoria has proven to be infertile ground for many manufacturers, owing to its island location and consequent increased transport costs for assembly of raw materials and access to outside markets for products. Essentially, it is the end of the line—not of a main line, however, as are Vancouver and Halifax, but of a detached, island-based transport system somewhat akin to that of St. John's, Newfoundland and not much more attractive as a location for manufacturing.

That Victoria ranks by far the lowest in wholesale trade is attributable largely to its lack of a well-populated hinterland to the north, the only direction to which the sea-girt city can turn for wholesale markets, and the dominant wholesaling influence of nearby Vancouver. All of the other western cities function as important service centres to their surrounding tributary areas, and wholesale trade is a key indicator of the significance of this central place role. In commercial terms Victoria stands in isolation, nourished to substantial size without the symbiotic relationship to its surrounding hinterland

that the other cities depended upon. Its retail trade, on the other hand, is able to flourish without an extensive hinterland because it is greatly bolstered by tourist spending that supplements the resources of the local retail market. Victoria's role as a tourist centre thereby compensates for its limited hinterland, in retail trade, at least, and is largely responsible for its leadership in personal services, accommodation and food services among the western cities. In the other categories, including community services, finance, and construction, Victoria ranks in a middle position, indicating no distinctive characteristics in these areas of its urban economy. The category "other industries" can be ignored as simply an unspecified residue.

Although Victoria's uniqueness has been indicated quantitatively through an examination of the labour force in western Canadian cities, this approach is insufficient to characterize the city fully. Other elements must be cited to flesh out the statistical skeleton that has been assembled. Several of its distinctive characteristics—for example, its role as a retirement centre—do not reflect directly in the labour force profile, but undoubtedly influence many of the employment sectors, especially services and retailing.

The prominence of government and the military has its counterpart in the relative weakness of manufacturing, wholesaling and other business activities. As a result, the cityscape is less cluttered with industrial and commercial establishments than other western cities and it is more residential in appearance, as well as in fact. In 1974 only seventy-six percent of Victoria's income, as determined from income tax returns, came from employment, compared with percentages of eighty-five to eighty-eight in the other western cities. The greater part of other income in Victoria came from investments and pensions, by far the highest proportions in these categories among the cities compared.¹ This may be accounted for chiefly by the large number of retired people in Victoria who receive no wage or salary income. The presence of these retired people augments the population beyond the apparent carrying capacity of the local industrial structure and helps to produce an essentially residential urban environment.

The attraction as a residential and retirement centre depends on a host of factors that combine to characterize Victoria. Prominent among them are the scenic qualities of the site and the moderate climate, as well as the sparseness of industrial and commercial development. These scenic qualities have been enhanced by the gardening tradition that has flourished in the area. Private gardens and attractive landscaping of houses and apartments are almost universal. Hanging flower baskets are a trademark of downtown Victoria, and the Butchart Gardens are world famous. These residentially attractive attributes constitute fertile ground for tourism.

Myth and reality have been mingled in the selling of tourist Victoria. Certain characteristics of Victoria have been emphasized to the exclusion of others, and it is difficult to discern where reality ends and myth begins. Victoria has a higher proportion of people of British origin than any other major western city, but whether or not that makes it more "English" is questionable. The "bit of Old England" tourist image has been nurtured assiduously by tourist-oriented commercial enterprises, building on a legacy that, admittedly, was more English in character originally than that of many other cities. The "city of gardens" image served to enhance the English character, while the presence of the naval base and a large number of retired military men did not detract from the creation of an English atmosphere. Many English-style private schools are found in the Victoria area that help to preserve British traditions. The residential character of the city also serves well the interests of tourism.

Within many of the functional categories specific elements may be cited that help to characterize Victoria. The automobile and passenger ferries connecting Victoria with the mainland are the most distinctive feature of transportation, while large wood product mills dominate manufacturing. In services the numerous private hospitals and nursing homes catering to the elderly are distinctive features, along with the private schools.

The present functional structure has evolved over a long period of time, and the relative significance of the functional elements has undoubtedly changed at various times. In order to trace the evolution of this structure, I have grouped the roles performed by Victoria into the following broad categories for individual study: government centre, naval base, retirement centre, tourist centre, transportation node, manufacturing centre, commercial centre, and agricultural and fishing centre.

Government Centre

Six years after Fort Victoria was erected by the Hudson's Bay Company as a fur trading headquarters Vancouver Island was granted to the Company for the purpose of establishing a Crown Colony. With the arrival of the first Royal Governor in 1850, Fort Victoria effectively became the capital of the Colony of Vancouver Island. For a number of years there was very little for the capital to administer, the population of the Colony having reached no more than 745 whites by the end of 1854, owing to the rather restrictive land policy of the Company.² The gold rush on the Fraser and Thompson Rivers in the spring of 1858 suddenly opened up the mainland and attracted many thousands of miners and others intent on serving or exploiting the miners. As the point of access and the source of supplies, Victoria profited greatly from the gold rush and grew in population. A Crown

Colony was established in 1858 on the mainland, British Columbia, to facilitate administration of the gold fields and maintain sovereignty. At the same time, the grant of Vancouver Island to the Hudson's Bay Company was revoked, that Colony reverting to the Crown. Victoria continued as the seat of government, and in 1866 when the two colonies were unified Victoria was named the capital of the enlarged Colony of British Columbia, but not without challenge from the advocates of its mainland rival, New Westminster. In turn, British Columbia joined the Dominion of Canada in 1871 and Victoria became a provincial capital. Hence, the capital function has persisted unbroken for 130 years and has increased tremendously in importance, with the rapid growth of the province.

The federal presence in Victoria initially was very modest, but a durable Customs House was erected in 1876 that still stands on its harbour-front site. In the 1880s a federal dry dock was completed that fulfilled one of the Terms of Union and this initiated a federal function that continues to this day, though the original dry dock is now incorporated in the naval dockyard and has been dwarfed by the much larger Esquimalt Graving Dock operated by Public Works Canada. Federal marine functions, such as servicing aids to navigation and hydrographic surveying, were based in Victoria because it was conveniently situated close to the open ocean and the entrance to Juan de Fuca Strait. In more recent times this role expanded, with the operation of weather ships on station in the Pacific and survey vessels in the Arctic from a base in Victoria. The chief distinctive feature of Victoria's federal role, however, is the presence of a number of research establishments. For the most part this function is a recent development, though the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory on Little Saanich Mountain dates from 1918. This site was chosen because of the mild climate and relatively low incidence of fog and cloud cover, especially in summer. About the same time the Dominion Experimental Farm was established at Saanichton to conduct research, particularly on the small fruits, flowers, bulbs and greenhouse crops that the mild climate favoured. Defence research related to the naval function and extensive oceanographic research developed in the recent period. The total employment of the provincial and federal governments in the Victoria Metropolitan Area in 1976 was approximately 10,000 and 9,000, respectively.³ This emphasizes the significance of both provincial and federal activities in the urban economy.

Naval Base

The Hudson's Bay Company passed over the magnificent, deep-water harbour of Esquimalt as the site for its headquarters fort in

favour of the smaller and shallower Victoria Harbour because the latter offered a more extensive, reasonably level area adjacent that was suitable for agriculture and settlement. After the United States-British America boundary settlement in 1846 several Royal Navy ships, including the *Fisgard*, *Pandora* and *Constance*, were engaged in hydrographic surveys in the area, and Esquimalt Harbour was fully charted at that time. Many geographic features, such as points, coves and inlets, were named after officers and men aboard the survey ships. The first tangible evidence of naval use of Esquimalt as a base was the erection of three small huts at Duntze Head in 1855, one for a hospital, one for stores, and the third for a hydrographic survey office.⁴ The need for a hospital had been emphasized the year before when 200 men who had been wounded in the Crimean War attack on Petropavlovsk arrived at Esquimalt and had to be taken to San Francisco for treatment.⁵ A naval reserve of 2.83 hectares (seven acres) was also established.⁶ The hospital, which was shifted to another building and used only intermittently, did not become permanent until some years later.⁷

The Esquimalt Naval Base was officially brought into being by the Admiralty in 1865, and a few years later became the headquarters of the Pacific Station. Over the years new buildings and servicing facilities were added to create a viable naval base (Figure 1). Construction of the dry dock was begun in 1875, but it was not officially opened until 1887. The first batteries were erected in 1878, and an artillery garrison arrived a few years later to undertake defence of the base.⁸ Major fortifications at Esquimalt came later, with the building of Fort Rodd at the entrance to the harbour in the 1890s. This fortress today is a National Historic Park.

The naval base languished for several years early in the present century following the withdrawal of the Imperial Garrison and most of the ships in 1906. The British government decided in 1905 to close the coaling stations and dockyards at both Esquimalt and Halifax, along with those in Jamaica and Trincomalee, in order to consolidate its forces. The Government of Canada took over the sea defences at Esquimalt and Halifax, but was unable to replace the Imperial units at previous strength. As a result, maintenance of the fortifications suffered. The naval dockyard was in the hands of a British skeleton staff and the number of ships on the Station had been reduced from seven to one. There was no Canadian naval force in existence until it was authorized by the Naval Service of Canada Act of May 4, 1910.⁹ The base was transferred to Canada later that year, and the huge task of creating a naval service was begun.

During two world wars the naval role of Victoria achieved its greatest prominence. A hasty build-up of personnel, ships and

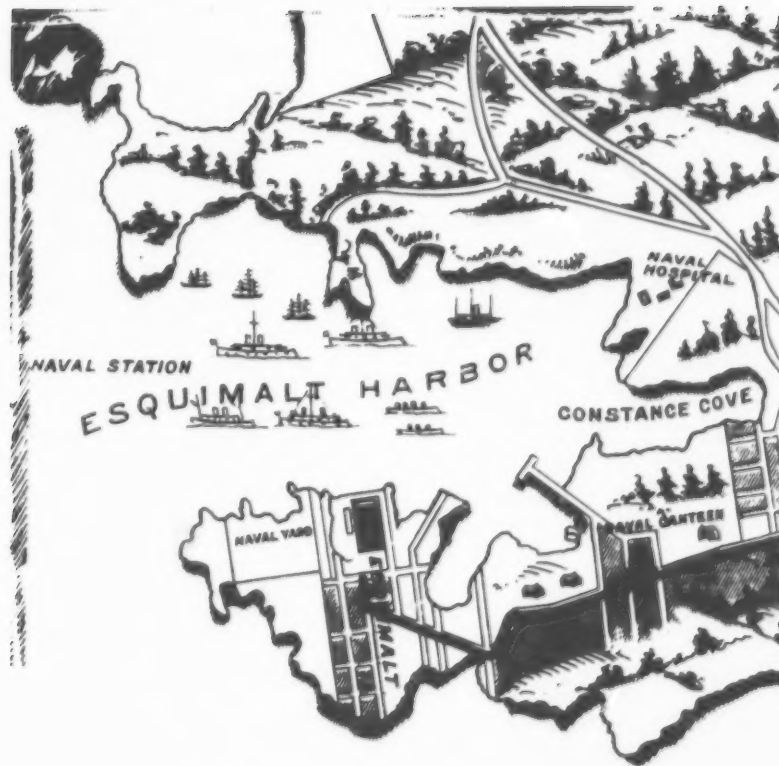


FIGURE 1—The ESQUIMALT NAVAL STATION as portrayed on a tourist map of 1901.

armaments was necessitated by the outbreak of World War I, only a few years after the Royal Canadian Navy was founded. Although naval activity declined greatly after the war, the condition of the base and degree of readiness was far better in 1939 than it had been in 1914. The decline in armed forces strength and associated civilian employment on the base was fairly gradual after World War II, and the naval establishment still constitutes a major source of employment. The naval base role of Victoria has varied in significance, having

experienced a low point early in the century, with a "changing of the guard," and flourished during two world wars, but it has stamped an indelible mark on the character and landscape of Victoria.

Retirement Centre

As early as 1865 it was suggested that Victoria was an excellent place in which to retire: "I know of no locality so admirably suited for ex-Indian officers and merchants to retire to—a class to which climate, in their advanced age, is a primary consideration."¹⁰ Over the years a number of people did retire to Victoria, especially military men who had been associated with the naval base. Other military, government, or business men who had spent time in Hong Kong, India or other British territories in East or South Asia gravitated to Victoria as well. Sometimes the acquaintance with Victoria originated when British families in Hong Kong or other outposts of Empire sent their children to Victoria for an English-style private school education.¹¹ Many of those who retired to Victoria were not elderly, but generally they were well-to-do. Late in the nineteenth century a *London Times* correspondent stated:

At the present time there is a noticeable difference between the people of Vancouver and Victoria (the capital of the province). In the latter place which is the seat of government and largely residential owing to a number of more or less wealthy people having found it a peculiarly beautiful place to live in, there is not much enterprise; the inhabitants are quite content, and very rightly so, to live at ease, having in many cases won their fortunes with hard work as miners in the Cariboo, and desire to finish their days in comfort. Consequently, they do not feel tempted to risk their incomes in new mining ventures.¹²

Although Victoria had a reputation as a retirement and residential centre in the latter part of the nineteenth century, it was not characterized by a high proportion of elderly people until the twentieth century. In company with all the western cities, Victoria had a more youthful population during the nineteenth century than did the older, eastern Canadian cities. Owing to the lack of migration data by age group for cities in the censuses of Canada, it is necessary to use figures on percentage of elderly in order to infer the extent of in-migration. In comparison with the ten largest Canadian cities, as reported in 1881 and 1891 censuses, Victoria had the lowest percentage of population sixty-five and over. In 1901 Victoria still ranked low in proportion of elderly—ninth out of the twelve cities for which the age-selective data are available, but, significantly, a little higher than Vancouver, which ranked eleventh. By 1921 Victoria ranked fifth in the group of twenty-one largest Canadian cities, and by 1931 it ranked first, a position it has held undisputed ever since. In fact, the lead over the second-ranked city

increased steadily after 1931, becoming one-third higher in percentage of elderly by 1971. One can infer, therefore, that Victoria became a statistically significant destination for elderly migrants during the first two decades of the century and the prime retirement centre during the 1930s.

Tourist Centre

As early as the 1870s Victoria was included in the Pacific coast itineraries arranged for tourists by Boston and New York travel companies. Cruises were available from San Francisco to Puget Sound and Alaska, with a brief call at Victoria. This same itinerary is followed today, more than a century later, with much larger and more luxurious cruise ships. Passengers of the 1870s went ashore for a few hours and were "intrigued by the quaint, 'English' appearance of the little town," just as they are today. The tourist image of Victoria thus began to take shape in the 1870s.¹³

During the 1880s Victoria was described not only as a summer resort, but also as a potential health resort. In the British Columbia circular of a world travel guide, Newton H. Chittenden proclaimed under the heading "Victoria as a Summer Resort for Tourists and Health Seekers":

Nature has awarded to Victoria, the most attractive and interesting situation and surroundings, of any city on the north Pacific Coast. Possessing a most enjoyable, invigorating and healthful climate, she lies central amidst the sublimest scenery in the new world.¹⁴

Another description pinpointed the supposed origin of the reputed healthful qualities of the atmosphere under the heading "A Charming Resort":

As a summer resort Victoria has a peculiar combination of unequalled advantages and is to be especially recommended to health-seeking invalids—beautifully situated on the southeastern extremity of Vancouver Island, the largest of the group forming the North Pacific archipelago. The city's atmosphere is charged with ozone, peculiar to this place only. It originates in the snow-cooled breezes on the Olympian range, mixes with the salt sea air of the Pacific and has peculiar health-restoring and life-prolonging qualities, which need only to be known abroad to make Victoria the sanatorium of the Pacific.¹⁵

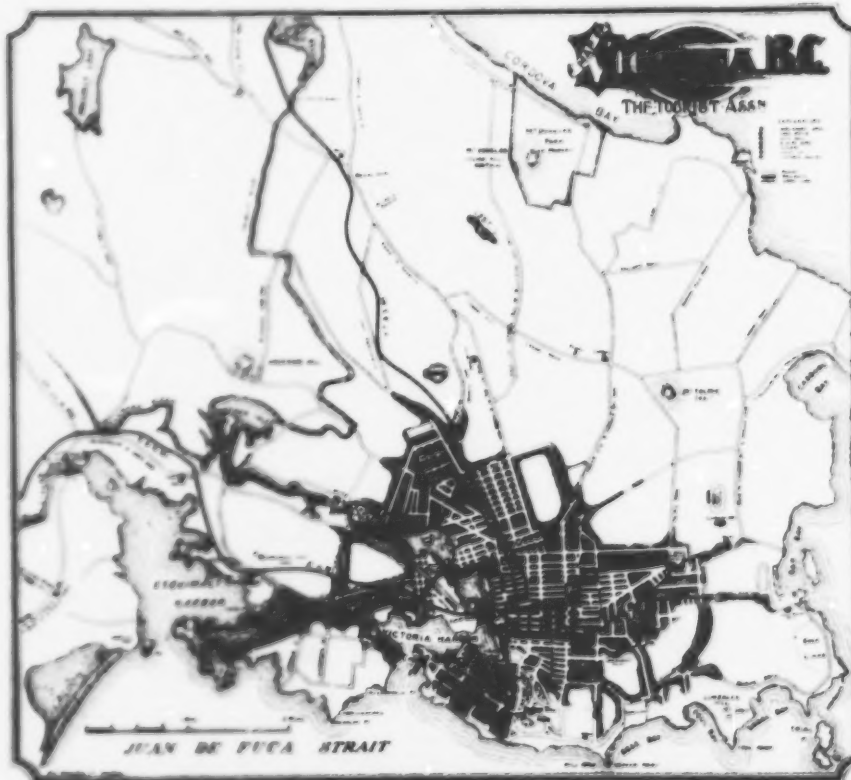
An Irish visitor in 1885 predicted Victoria's future with amazing accuracy, including the principal source of its future tourist flow:

If my estimate of the future of Victoria be correct, commerce will inevitably pass her by. On the mainland will arise, at the mouth of the Fraser, city or cities, which will grow enormous in the near future; while on this lovely island will be a pleasure resort, incom-

parably beautiful—the Brighton, or the Eastbourne, of the Pacific coast of Canada; and not of Canada alone, but of America—for, already, from the hot, dry sand of California, the visitor seeks the refreshing green, and cool breezes of Vancouver's Island.¹⁶

Despite the tourist image that had become established, numbers of visitors were few until after the turn of the century when the city took steps to actively promote tourism. A Tourist Development Association was established in 1901 and the Board of Trade published the first tourist booklet in that year (Figure II).¹⁷ The Association's first publication emphasized that Victoria had the appearance of an English city and that the countryside resembled that of Old England.¹⁸

You can do your Shopping Cheaper in Victoria than in any other City on the Coast



If you Really Wish to Enjoy the Balance of your Life, Buy a Home in Victoria

FIGURE II—The TOURIST ASSOCIATION MAP OF VICTORIA issued in 1902 was adorned with city-boosting slogans.

Lobbying was directed at persuading the CPR to provide daily scheduled steamship services to Victoria, in order to make it more accessible to visitors, and to build a tourist hotel in Victoria. Both endeavours were successful, with the inauguration of the "triangle" passenger service linking Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle in 1903 and the completion of the Empress Hotel in 1908. The Butchart Gardens, which became a prime tourist attraction, also were opened to the public in 1908, a banner year for tourism.¹⁹ Over the years the Empress Hotel was expanded several times and new visitor accommodations were established as the industry flourished.

The image of Victoria as a "bit of Old England" was a continuing theme in the development of the tourist industry. In addition, however, various slogans were used, the most long-lasting and successful being "Follow the Birds to Victoria" first used in 1918 and officially adopted four years later.²⁰ Improved ferry transportation and the widespread use of the automobile enhanced accessibility, and tourist numbers increased greatly in the 1920s. The Depression of the 1930s and World War II had the opposite effect on the industry, but it bounced back quickly in the postwar period to become a leading income earner for the community.

Transportation Node

When the Hudson's Bay Company founded Fort Victoria, it was concerned chiefly with the potential port function of the post. In order to perform the role of fur trading headquarters as the Company envisioned, the new post had to be accessible by ship from many coastal points, as well as from England. Because San Francisco was the only major city on the Pacific Coast, shipping connections were established at an early date, and some of the California gold rush miners came all the way to Fort Victoria to purchase supplies that were still available there.²¹ When the Fraser River gold rush began in 1858 Victoria suddenly became the San Francisco of the north, the jumping off point for miners heading up-river and the source of provisions for their ventures. Boats of all description were pressed into service for the trip from Victoria to the head of navigation on the Fraser. The gold rush opened up the interior to settlement and development, and for several decades Victoria was the major port and key transportation centre of British Columbia. It was not without rivals, however, because New Westminster, near the mouth of the Fraser, arose during the gold rush period as the initial mainland challenger. It was never successful in capturing more than a modest proportion of Victoria's shipping trade. The requirement by Governor Douglas that all miners obtain licences in Victoria before proceeding inland and the designation of Victoria as a free port in 1860 practically assured its dominance over New Westminster.²²

Land transportation developed slowly and it was not until the 1870s that Victoria and Nanaimo, the coal mining town, were connected by road. In early years Victoria was the single focus of Vancouver Island's development and transportation system. The rise of Vancouver on the mainland strengthened the Nanaimo focus and intercepted trade that formerly passed through Victoria. The building of a railway between eastern Canada and British Columbia within ten years was one of the Terms of the Union when the west coast province entered confederation in 1871. Victorians wanted the railway to follow a Bute Inlet-Seymour Narrows route to the Island, then southward to a terminus at Esquimalt. It was not until 1883 that this route was finally dismissed in favour of a more southerly route along the Fraser River, terminating at Burrard Inlet.²³ The Esquimalt and Nanaimo section of the original proposal was built as a separate project. It was completed in 1886, the same year that the long-delayed transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway reached Burrard Inlet. Such was the power of Victoria's position in British Columbia in the 1870s and 1880s that it was able to fend off for many years the almost inevitable decision to follow the geographically superior route.

The completion of the transcontinental railway was the beginning of the end of Victoria's water transport supremacy. As the railway terminus, Vancouver grew rapidly and during the 1890s replaced Victoria as the premier port of British Columbia. In 1890 the value of Victoria's exports was about six times as great as Vancouver's and the imports more than four times as great.²⁴ By 1903 Victoria's exports amounted to no more than one-third of Vancouver's and her imports a little more than half.²⁵ Vancouver took over the export of much of the fish and mineral products that formerly were handled by Victoria. The development of the Outer Wharves in the 1880s permitted Victoria to handle larger ships than could enter the harbour, and Victoria thus retained its role as a port of call for trans-Pacific steamships (Figure III).²⁶ The value of imports continued to rise up to World War I, while the value of exports declined.²⁷ The completion of the breakwater and the new wharves in the Outer Harbour after the war gave a great boost to the shipping trade and laid the foundation for the modern function of the port as a shipper of lumber and grain. The grain elevator was opened in 1929 but, except for two years, never handled more than one million bushels a year until the 1950s.²⁸ Obsolescence overtook the facility and it was closed in 1976, being demolished shortly thereafter. Since the 1930s the shipping trade has grown in total tonnage, with the growth of the city, but Victoria has continued to lose ground relative to other British Columbia ports. Its volume of ferry traffic, along with that of land and air transport, has increased greatly, however, owing to population growth and the expansion of tourism.

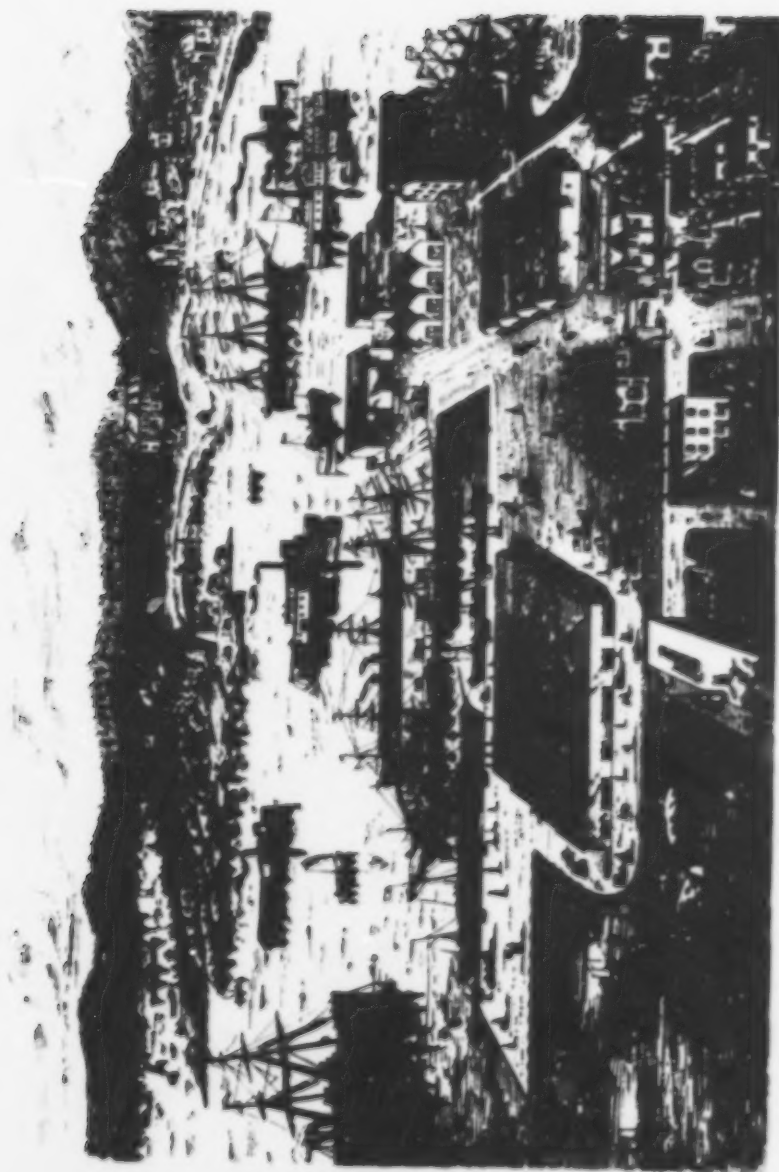


FIGURE III—THE OUTER WHARVES AND WAREHOUSES OF R. P. RITHET AND COMPANY ABOUT 1900

Manufacturing Centre

The earliest manufacturing activities were the typical pioneer industries of sawmilling and grist milling. A small sawmill was built at the head of Esquimalt Harbour in 1848 and a grist mill was added two years later.²⁹ Other sawmills were built during the 1850s and a few small breweries, a tannery and a sash and door factory were established, but manufacturing was not well developed until the 1870s and 1880s. Competition from established industries in San Francisco hampered development, and most of the gold funnelled through Victoria after 1858 went there to pay for manufactured goods.³⁰ By the time of Confederation the list of industries had lengthened a little and the range had broadened: two lumber yards, two sash factories, two tanneries, four breweries, two distilleries, one iron foundry, one gas works, and a shipyard.³¹

During the next two decades, when Victoria flourished as the major city and key transport centre of British Columbia, manufacturing expanded more rapidly and became more diversified. A number of industries served the whole province, as well as the local market. The largest firm, Albion Iron Works, produced a wide range of machinery, equipment, and cast iron construction materials. The Victoria Boot and Shoe Factory turned out 50,000 pairs of shoes annually and the clothing industry employed over 300. Two furniture factories, Sehl's and Weiler Brothers, were reputed to control the provincial market.³² The flour milling industry not only produced wheat flour for the British Columbia market, but also imported rice from Bangkok and Saigon and exported rice flour to Japan and Hong Kong (Figure IV).³³

A sharp decline of manufacturing began in the 1890s and continued into the twentieth century. The transportation changes that fostered the growth of Vancouver were mainly responsible for the decline, though other factors contributed to it. From a total of 239 manufacturing establishments and over 2,000 employees in 1890 the industry shrank to 82 establishments and a little more than 1,400 employees in 1900. It was the secondary industries serving provincial markets, such as clothing, shoes and furniture, that experienced the greatest difficulties. The market-oriented Vancouver location simply became more competitive. The Albion Iron Works slumped into financial difficulties, and the clothing industry was especially hard hit, having suffered the additional loss of the military market when the British army and naval units were withdrawn. Many industries closed down while others fled to the mainland. During the first decade of the century the character of manufacturing changed, with the lumber industry assuming the dominance that it retains to this day. In 1910 it accounted for some forty-five percent of manufacturing employment and nearly half of the total value of output.³⁴

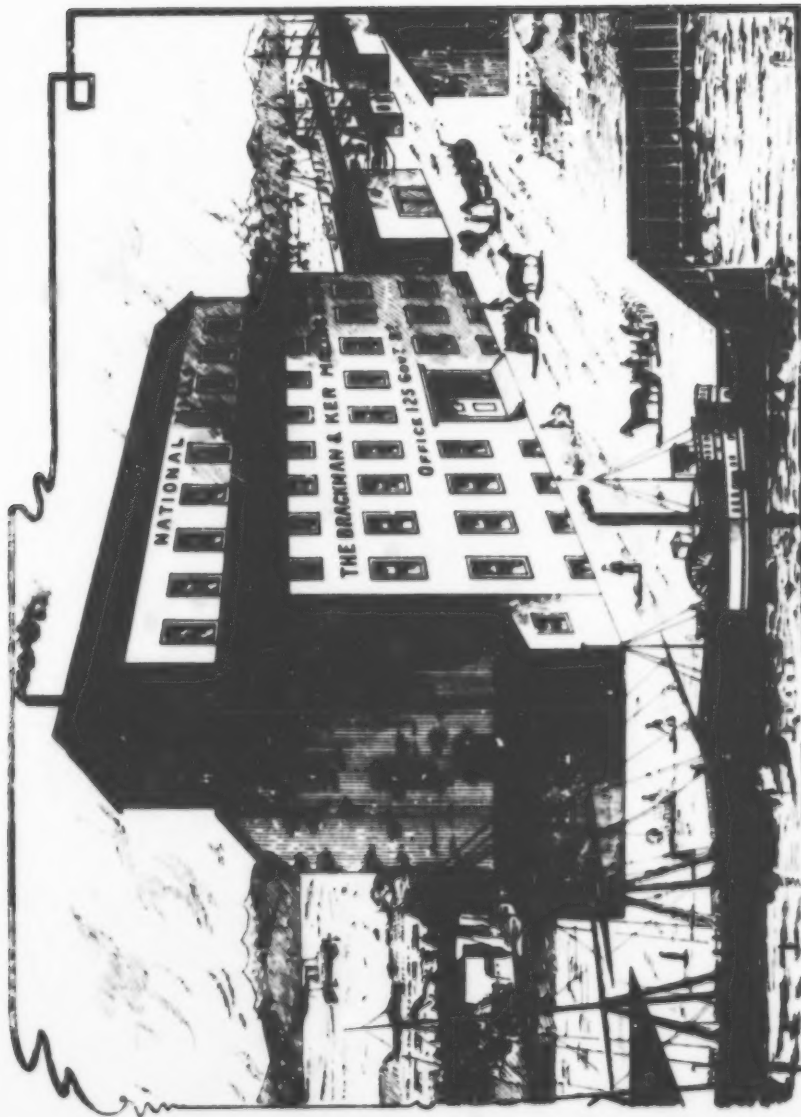


FIGURE IV The BRACKMAN AND KER MILLING COMPANY'S NATIONAL MILLS about 1890

Manufacturing experienced peaks during two world wars and evolved to the present as an industry characterized by a base of wood products and shipbuilding, along with a diversified local service component. Shipbuilding did not become a major industry until World War I and then did not prosper again until World War II. The presence of the Esquimalt Graving Dock gave Victoria a special advantage in shipbuilding and ship repairing, but only one of the two large shipyards remains: Yarrows, situated in Esquimalt adjacent to the graving dock.

Several historic phases of manufacturing activity may be identified. The initial period of small pioneer or frontier industries was followed by a post-Confederation period of prosperous secondary industries serving a wide provincial market. A period of decline set in as the century waned, and manufacturing became restructured and more locally oriented during the recent period.

Commercial Centre

Victoria's business community enjoyed early success based on the runaway demands of the gold rush period. A healthy commercial establishment, therefore, preceded the extensive development of manufacturing. As other Vancouver Island and mainland towns were established, Victoria became more involved in wholesaling. Financial houses were established to handle the large amounts of gold that flowed through Victoria. Several banks were already in business, including the American-based Wells Fargo and the British-based Bank of British North America, when the Bank of British Columbia received its charter in 1862.³⁵

All commercial functions expanded with the growth of the province after Confederation, and Victoria maintained its role as the leading centre of trade and commerce until the slump of the 1890s and the shift of many transport and trading functions to Vancouver. As was the case in manufacturing, Victoria reached its high point as a commercial centre in the early 1890s. The 1892 *Directory* stated, "Victoria is the distributing point for most of the wholesale trade of the Province, while all or nearly all, the trading posts on Vancouver Island and the Northwest coast of the mainland obtain their supplies here."³⁶ In the realm of finance the Bank of British Columbia achieved great prominence and maintained its head office in Victoria, though it had branches in San Francisco, Portland, Vancouver, Nanaimo and Kamloops.³⁷

A worldwide depression which began in 1892 happened to coincide with a period of great commercial vulnerability in Victoria. Although the railway terminus function was installed in Vancouver by



FIGURE V. A TYPICAL OFFICE BUILDING of 1890, the Wilson-Dalby Block.

1887, the momentum of Victoria's commercial and financial development sustained its dominance for several more years. The effects of the depression were severe, but Vancouver weathered it more successfully and ended up gaining at Victoria's expense. During the depression Victoria lost part of the fishery products trade, most of its trade connected with mining and part of its distribution business.³⁸ Owing to severe financial losses, the Bank of British Columbia never regained its leading position among provincial financial institutions.

These losses, however, marked a change that was taking place in Victoria's economy, rather than a net decline. The population of Victoria continued to grow and the retail trade increased. Victoria grew from approximately 17,000 in 1891 to 21,000 in 1901 and reached nearly 32,000 by 1911, almost double the population of twenty years earlier. Vancouver, of course, grew at a much faster rate in both periods. Business became more locally oriented, but continued to expand. There seemed to be a great reluctance to acknowledge that Victoria was losing its commercial supremacy, and there was great

optimism that the city would yet achieve a railway terminus function when the plan for a new transcontinental railway came to fruition. The prevailing optimism in Victoria, as elsewhere in western Canada, fueled a great real estate boom in the 1909-1912 period. A large number of new office blocks in downtown Victoria were built at this time, as well as many housing subdivisions. In fact, the inventory of office space created at that time was sufficient to meet the demand in Victoria until the 1950s. The real estate boom ended with the outbreak of World War I and Victoria's drive for commercial greatness was terminated. Thus, the commercial structure that exists today had its origins during the first decade of the century when Victoria's economic emphasis gradually shifted from trade and commerce to government and tourism.

Agricultural and Fishing Centre

Just as the Hudson's Bay Company had an eye cocked toward the water transport potential of Victoria's site, so also was it cognizant of the agricultural possibilities. It was hoped that Fort Victoria would be agriculturally self-sufficient and it was expected that Victoria would be called upon to provide part of the food supply for Russian posts farther north on the Pacific coast. The Company had worked out a trading agreement with the Russians in 1839.³⁹ A number of Company farms were established, but agriculture developed slowly, as did settlement. By 1855 there were over 4,000 hectares (10,000 acres) in farms, though only about 570 (1,400) were improved. All of this land was within the area of what is now metropolitan Victoria. Wheat and potatoes were by far the leading crops produced, and sheep far outnumbered other livestock.⁴⁰

In later years there was more experimentation to determine crops best suited to the area. Apple orchards had been planted at several locations, but "by 1875 it had become apparent that the Island would not become a major tree-fruit area."⁴¹ Nursery crops, on the other hand, were especially favoured by the moderate climate and an association of nurserymen was established in 1887. Even as early as the 1860s the modern farmer's plaint was heard, "At the present moment we believe that cereals can be introduced into the Port of Victoria at as cheap a rate as they can be produced in the colony of Vancouver."⁴² Most of the land suitable for agriculture in the Victoria area had been occupied by 1890 and the industry was still highly diversified.⁴³

Increasing specialization occurred during the present century, partly as a result of the increase in market gardening to serve the expanding urban population, and also because greater advantage was taken of the favourable climatic conditions to produce special crops. Even before World War I it was reported that greenhouse-grown cut

flowers, tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuce were shipped in large quantities as far east as Winnipeg and as far north as Fairbanks, Alaska for winter consumption.⁴⁴ The establishment of the Dominion Experimental Farm at Saanichton was a recognition of the importance of the area for horticultural crops. Of course, urban expansion over the years encroached on a large portion of the agricultural land, driving dairy farms northward to the Cowichan Valley and forcing greater intensity of farming on smaller plots of land. The highly specialized crops of bulbs, cut flowers, English holly, small fruits and vegetables, including those produced in greenhouses, were best fitted to withstand the pressure, and some of this productive capacity has survived to the present day.

Fishing was mainly an Indian occupation in the Victoria area until the 1870s. Fish were dried or salted for the modest trading that took place, and fresh fish were made available to the local market. The commercial fishery awaited the development of a canning process which was not introduced until 1867 when the first cannery was opened on the Fraser River.⁴⁵ During the 1870s the industry expanded greatly and Victoria became the financial and wholesaling centre for the industry, as well as the port through which most of the fishery products were shipped, although the processing was carried out chiefly on the lower Fraser River.⁴⁶ These management and shipping activities were centred in Victoria until the late 1890s when many operations shifted to Vancouver. Fish processing was never important in Victoria, but one or two small plants have been operated during the present century and Victoria has long been a wintering port for a sizable fishing fleet. Victoria has also become well known as the centre of a salt water sport fishing area.

Allied with fishing was the fur sealing industry based in Victoria, which developed into a major economic activity during the 1870s and continued to prosper for about thirty years (Figure VI). In 1891, for example, a fleet of forty-nine vessels, employing over 1,100 men, was fitted out in Victoria Harbour for the seal hunting season in the North Pacific.⁴⁷ Toward the end of the century concern about the apparent depletion of the seal herds was expressed by the United States government, but it was not until an international treaty was signed in 1909 that the open ocean sealing was ended, to be replaced by controlled harvesting on the Pribiloff Islands.⁴⁸ This officially terminated the sealing industry interlude in Victoria's history, though catches had dwindled some years before.

Phases in the Development of Victoria's Urban Character

The evolution of Victoria's functional character falls clearly into two long periods, the nineteenth century and the twentieth century,

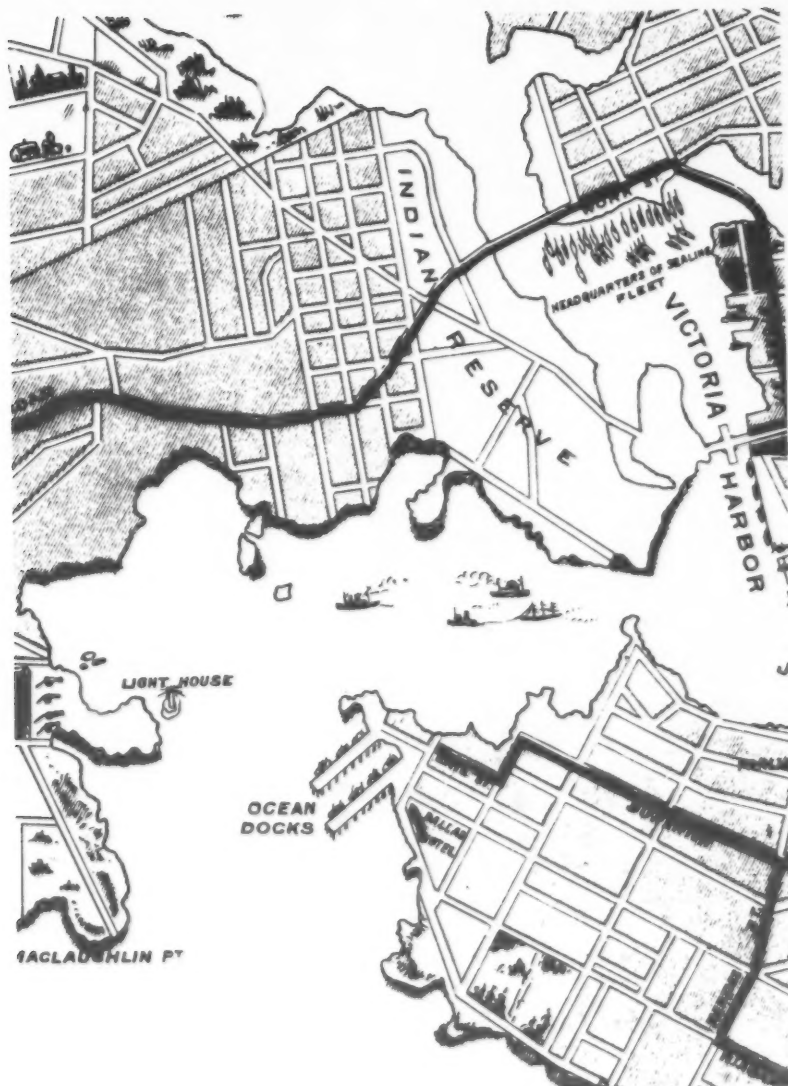


FIGURE VI- THE SEALING FLEET, as moored in the Upper Harbour, portrayed on a tourist map of 1901.

and several distinct shorter subdivisions. Nineteenth century Victoria was, foremost, a city of trade and commerce, which evolved in the twentieth century into a city of government, retirement and tourism.

During the period 1843–1858 Victoria was little more than a trading post surrounded by a small agricultural community, the total non-Indian population hardly exceeding 1,000, even at the end of that period. From the Fraser gold rush in 1858 until the 1870s Victoria may be characterized as a frontier town and city performing an entrepôt role. It became incorporated as a city in 1862, after four years of phenomenal growth while serving as the point of access and supply to the gold fields. Its political capital function was preserved through the successive changes from Vancouver Island colony, to British Columbia colony and finally to province in 1871. That date is a convenient one to mark the beginning of the next phase in which Victoria became the dominant city in a developing province, performing key functions in transportation, trade, manufacturing and finance. This period of urban dominance extended into the 1890s, ending, perhaps, at the close of the 1892–1896 depression.⁴⁹ Although Victoria's changing role *vis-à-vis* Vancouver occurred within a rather short span of years, it is difficult to select a single year to mark the change because there were no momentous events to which causal effects might be attributed. However, the opening of the new provincial Legislative Buildings in 1898 is symbolic of the dawning of a new era in Victoria during which government rather than business became its *raison d'être*.

Victoria's growth continued in the 1898–1914 period, escalating toward the end into a full-blown real estate boom, but it was a city in transition and somewhat confused in identity. One sector of the community was loath to relinquish commercial leadership and directed much energy to fighting a battle that had already been lost. Most of the rest were content to cultivate government, tourism and local needs, as well as the residential qualities of Victoria. By the 1920s the modern roles of Victoria had become fairly well established. The two world wars, of course, produced an emphasis on shipbuilding and brought the naval base, with its whole military apparatus, to the forefront. Apart from the obvious subdivisions of wartime, inter-war and postwar periods, there are no clearcut phases of Victoria's functional character comparable to those identified in the nineteenth century. Worthy of note, however, is the pronounced variation in growth rate between the periods 1914 to 1939 and 1939 to the present—a variation which undoubtedly affected urban character, though not specifically functional roles. Victoria increased in population by approximately one-third during the first period, while it tripled in size during the second.

Conclusion

The uniqueness of Victoria compared with the other major western Canadian cities has been demonstrated, and the various elements of Victoria's present day functional character have been traced through time to determine their origin and influence on the city's development. Victoria's character changed quite significantly at several stages of its evolution, most notably at the turn of the century when its modern functional structure began to take shape. All of its modern roles, however, are rooted in the city's distant past, even though the urban character was altered several times. The approach used in this study, that is, the isolation of specific elements of functional structure—in this case partly through use of census labour force statistics, and the tracing of each of these elements through time—is offered as a useful procedure in the study of urban personality development.

NOTES

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PART FOUR

URBAN SOCIAL PROBLEMS

INTRODUCTION

While urban boosters proclaimed the virtues of city life and attempted to promote urban growth, many residents of western cities were forced to endure deplorable social conditions. Some problems, such as epidemics and civil disorder, forcibly thrust themselves into the public eye, and for the preservation of general health and property most communities responded. Other problems, relating to the quality of life of segments of urban residents, were neglected and only gradually did public awareness grow. Even awareness, however, was not enough to produce action. Rapid expansion, the expense of constantly changing technology, and the drain on municipal treasuries through mismanagement and corruption meant that city governments were often financially incapable of responding to all demands without massive tax increases. As a result, the areas directly affecting commerce and industry, such as the extension of streets, the promotion of growth, and the erection of public buildings, received priority. Little public money was left for education, recreation, or ameliorating the social and physical condition of the urban poor.¹

Another stumbling block was the reluctance of the community to accept public responsibility for certain urban problems. This was an age when many community leaders were strongly influenced in their attitudes to social problems by Social Darwinist thinking, which held that one's social and economic condition was an individual responsibility and that substantial public action would encourage pauperism. In this environment, the problems of neglected children and the unemployed—only two of a myriad of urban social problems—were either brushed aside or ignored by municipal government and left in the hands of individuals or voluntary agencies. The patterns discovered in the case studies of Calgary and Vancouver contained in this section were undoubtedly shared by other western cities and give further support to a theory of the development of public welfare in the West already put forward by Professor John Taylor.² While further case studies are still needed before a strongly-based synthesis can be attempted, the usefulness of the approaches taken here is apparent.

NOTES

- ¹ For a detailed discussion of many of these problems in one city see John Taylor, ed., "Fire, Disease and Water in the Nineteenth Century City," Special Issue, *Urban History Review*, Vol. 8 (June 1979), pp. 3-115. This issue contains a useful bibliography of studies dealing with fire, disease and water.
- ² John Taylor, "The Urban West: Public Welfare and a Theory of Urban Development," in A. R. McCormack and Ian MacPherson, eds., *Cities in the West* (Ottawa, 1975), pp. 286-307.

14. IN SEARCH OF NEGLECTED AND DELINQUENT CHILDREN: THE CALGARY CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY, 1909-1920

HENRY C. KLASSEN

During the last decade and a half a small but important body of literature on the history of child welfare in Canada has made its appearance. A part of the story of the care of disadvantaged Canadian children has found an outlet in the works of Richard B. Splane and Neil Sutherland, as well as in articles by Susan E. Houston, T. R. Morrison and Wesley B. Turner.¹ Studies of Montreal, Winnipeg, Kingston and Vancouver include commentaries on child welfare.² The subject needs to be explored more fully, and the purpose of this essay is to seek further understanding by dealing with the work of the Calgary Children's Aid Society which was founded in 1909 and which was the first attempt to provide organized care of neglected and delinquent children in Calgary. For eleven years, from 1909 to 1920, the Calgary Children's Aid Society bore the heavy responsibility of caring for the city's deprived children. In the worsening economic and social climate at the close of the decade the Society found itself unable to operate effectively and in 1920 it gave over its work to the city council, which then created the children's aid department. Though its usefulness and years of service were largely unacknowledged in its final days, the Society during the course of its existence helped to turn the city in the direction of trying to rehabilitate the child in trouble.

In early twentieth-century Canadian cities the inspiration to tackle the problem of social hardships often came from voluntary endeavour. In Calgary as in other sizable urban communities, the willingness of men and women to devote their energy and money voluntarily to social improvement found expression, in part, in the Children's Aid Society. Taking the initiative in organizing this voluntary agency, they remained a significant force in its activities throughout its career. But because their resources were insufficient to meet the needs of unfortunate children and because only some parents contributed to the Society which cared for their children, public aid was required. The leaders of the Society appealed to both the Alberta

government and the city of Calgary, but especially to the city for in this age one looked primarily to the local authorities for social assistance. From the outset the contributions of the city were much larger than those of the province. The Society thus owed its stability to private charity, to parents, to provincial support, and particularly to the ever-growing role that the city played in its financial affairs.

Many aspects of life in Calgary before, during, and after World War One gave rise to the neglect of children. The rapid growth of the city from 20,000 in 1907 to 61,000 in 1912 caused property values to soar, forcing a large portion of the poor working-class population into housing that was overcrowded and without adequate sanitation facilities.³ With such housing conditions came much ill-health. The hard times during the business depression of 1913, besides bringing more poverty, had the consequence of swelling the ranks of the unemployed, destroying domestic harmony, and increasing the number of families deserted by their fathers.⁴ The social disorganization brought about by the war, the influenza epidemic of 1918, and the depression in the following year produced additional uncertainties.⁵ All of these conditions had a profound effect upon family life, leaving many a child in a state of neglect or homeless. In the period from 1909 to 1920 the Children's Aid Society cared for about 6000 children and brought some 3000 children before the juvenile court.

I

In the fall of 1908 the *Calgary Herald's* article on the needs of deprived and delinquent children drew a sympathetic response from a large number of citizens.⁶ They were disturbed by the knowledge that parental neglect of children had become a serious problem. Some of these people had recently shown an interest in taking into their care four destitute infants whose parents drank too much. But provincial legislation giving charitable persons authority to take charge of the poor infants was lacking. In the absence of such legislation it was difficult to rescue children from neglectful parents. Relatives, friends and the Salvation Army had long given care to deprived children whose parents asked for help.⁷ It was believed, however, that the community also had an obligation to the children of parents who though unable to look after them were disinclined to accept assistance. Further, there was a growing demand for the care of juvenile delinquents. Concerned individuals shared the *Calgary Herald's* view that what was required was a children's aid society modelled on those in Ontario and responsible for extending protection and care to all neglected and delinquent children, and they were pleased when, in February 1909, the provincial legislature in Edmonton passed the Children's Protection Act of Alberta.⁸

The Act, as well as laying upon every city of 10,000 or more inhabitants the duty to provide a shelter for neglected children, encouraged the formation of children's aid societies, and in March 1909 the Calgary Children's Aid Society was founded. Edmonton, following Calgary's lead, soon established a society, and by 1913 additional societies had been organized in Lethbridge and Medicine Hat.⁹ Like the other organizations, the Calgary Children's Aid Society would operate under the central direction and control of the superintendent of the provincial department of neglected and dependent children who was responsible to the Attorney-General. Children in trouble fell into two broad categories: boys and girls who received inadequate care were called neglected children, and those who broke the law were classified as delinquents. The Act gave the Society the power to take charge of neglected and delinquent children, bring them before a court and become their legal guardian. It was also empowered to keep them in care in the local shelter or place them in foster homes.

Protection, in its broadest sense, meant improving the condition of the lives of disadvantaged children, and this worthwhile aim was uppermost in the minds of those who took part in creating and guiding the Society. Among those who helped to launch the Society was J.J. Kelso, superintendent of the department of neglected and dependent children for the province of Ontario and a major Canadian child welfare figure who visited the city to share his knowledge of children's aid societies.¹⁰ R.B. Chadwick, the newly-appointed superintendent of the department of neglected and dependent children for Alberta, also came to assist in organizing the Society.¹¹ Chadwick, a native of Hamilton, Ontario and a former secretary of the Edmonton YMCA, would hold the post of provincial superintendent until his death in June 1915.¹² Then Rev. A.M. Macdonald, former editor of the *Strathcona Plaindealer*, would move into the superintendent's office and oversee the work in the province.¹³

It was up to Calgarians to take responsibility for the work in the city. Local leadership was provided by the Society's executive, which was annually elected. At the top, occupying the office of honorary president for one or more years, were the big names: W.H. Cushing, a leading businessman; R.B. Bennett, a prominent lawyer; Mayor H.A. Sinnott; and Senator James A. Lougheed. Below them were the officers who actually directed the Society. Among the most active officers were J.T. McDonald, W.M. Connacher, Mrs. Maude Riley and Rev. A.D. McDonald. J.T. McDonald, a grocer and hardware merchant, was a vice-president in 1909 and 1910 and the president from 1914 to 1918. W.M. Connacher, manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia, served as the treasurer between 1909 and 1918 and as the president in 1919 and 1920. Mrs. Maude Riley, wife of Harold W.

Riley, was a vice-president from 1916 to 1920. Rev. A.D. McDonald, full-time secretary and agent of the Society between 1910 and 1920, a Methodist, a graduate of Dalhousie University and Pine Hill Theological College, was in charge of the daily operations.¹⁴

The leaders of the Calgary Children's Aid Society consciously organized their work around the ideas they had collected from their study of J.J. Kelso's pioneering work in Ontario.¹⁵ A better environment was their prescription for the neglected child. Closely related to the remedy of wholesome surroundings was the idea that a good foster home was the best place for such a child if the situation in his own home could not be corrected, for the warmth of a stable and loving family would offer an opportunity for a new life. Moved by the influence of reforming Christianity, they further believed that the evils of neglect and delinquency could be prevented if the home accepted moral guidance. The translation of these ideas into reality would require the co-operation and good will of many citizens, and this co-operation and good will would have to be cultivated. With the help of the press, the churches, the schools, the police and organizations like the Salvation Army, the YWCA, the YMCA, the local Council of Women and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Children's Aid Society would have to teach the city to think in terms of child saving.

From the beginning it was clear that the Society needed two basic services to establish a child-saving program. One of these services was a shelter where the neglected child could find temporary accommodation. The other was a juvenile court for the care of young offenders. Thanks to the support of the city and charitable organizations, it was possible to open a shelter in 1909. The challenge of setting up a juvenile court proved to be more difficult, mostly because the Society was at first not ready to become involved in the administration of juvenile justice. Everyone knew that the courtroom would be a more complicated matter than the shelter. At any rate, the creation of a juvenile court was put off until 1912, though already in 1909 the Society began to give care to juvenile delinquents in the shelter.

II

Accommodation suited to the needs of neglected children was an indispensable aspect of the operations of the Calgary Children's Aid Society. Fortunately for the Society, it was able to use the Salvation Army children's home at 110 Second Avenue East as a shelter until January 1910, when it was destroyed by fire.¹⁶ By the summer of that year the Society had found quarters for children in need of care in the old Maternity Hospital on Twelfth Avenue at Sixth Street Southeast. Within several years, as it received more and more children, the Society felt cramped in these premises which could hold only about thirty

children. In response to the growing demand for accommodation the city built a larger shelter, with room for about fifty-five children, at Harvetta Heights in the Ogden district, and in the summer of 1915 the children were moved into this new home.

The shelter, from the outset, housed a mixture of children, those boys and girls who were considered cases of neglect which involved no delinquency on the part of the child, as well as those who were looked upon as delinquents. Although the delinquent children were usually in a minority, they could be troublesome and a bad influence upon the others and this worried the leaders of the Society. They did not want the shelter to be regarded as a juvenile prison.¹⁷ What was needed in their view was a temporary detention home for wayward boys and girls who were being held for trial. But the provincial authorities could not be persuaded to establish a detention home in this period. As a result the wayward youths continued to mingle with the others, though the most unruly delinquent children were often held either in the guard rooms in the shelter or in police cells. In the final analysis the shelter's doors were open to almost all children in need of assistance.

By exercising its power to seek out and investigate cases of neglect and delinquency the Society discovered children whom it felt compelled to take into the shelter for care and protection. Not all the children so approached ended up in the shelter. Many of them were dealt with in their own homes or at the places where they worked or amused themselves. But if children were found to be homeless, abandoned, destitute, or living in homes in which they were suffering from cruelty or conditions that endangered their health, the Society put them into the shelter. Behind this action was the conviction that every child ought to have a chance to do well in life. Yet the shelter was not intended to replace the natural home. The Society made sure that it remained a temporary home, a place where a child could live in favourable surroundings for several weeks or months or longer if necessary, until he could be returned to his parents or placed in a foster home. Desirable as foster homes were as an alternative, it was held that children should be reunited with their own parents if at all possible. To this end neglectful mothers and fathers were encouraged by the Society to take their responsibilities as parents seriously and develop homes that would be fit for their children.

The shelter staff played a vital part in rehabilitating deprived children and in preparing them for their return to family life. The staff, which by 1915 consisted of a matron, an assistant nurse, a night nurse, a cook, a housekeeper, two domestics, a janitor and a teacher, provided various forms of care for the children. In addition to feeding and clothing them and training them to work, it offered a public school education, religious instruction, recreation and health care. The forms

and measure of care given to each child depended to some degree on its age and background. About two-thirds of the boys and girls came from an unstable home situation and these generally needed more assistance, particularly health care, than the others.¹⁸ Equally, the children between the ages of one and three, who often came to the shelter in an undernourished condition and who usually made up at least one-third of the shelter population, required special care.

By 1913 a classroom in the shelter, with a teacher provided by the Calgary Public School Board in charge, was being used for educating the children between the ages of four and seventeen. With teachers like Miss J. Parrott, a competent and enthusiastic person who taught the children in the years 1913 to 1915, the Society felt that it was matching the kind of education that was available to the more fortunate boys and girls in the public school system. The schooling for the shelter children included daily instruction from the Bible, for the teachings of Christianity were considered an essential part of their education. Although she knew that they might not be with her for very long, the teacher cared about their future, giving them as much individual attention as she could and holding special classes during the evening for those in the upper grades who were doing badly.

Beyond the lessons in the classroom, there were chores for the children, like making their beds, keeping their rooms tidy, washing dishes, and sweeping and washing floors. At the Harvetta Heights shelter they looked after their own vegetable and flower garden. It was the business of the Society to ensure that the school-age boys and girls learned to accept assignments designed to help keep the shelter clean, orderly and attractive. The work they did, the responsibilities they accepted, would perhaps encourage them to take pride in themselves as useful members of the large shelter family.¹⁹ Those who caught the concept of obligation towards the family would likely try to apply it in the homes awaiting them.

To the schooling and the little jobs for the children of the shelter the Society added recreation. They played games in the playroom, listened to records donated by the Hudson's Bay Company, went on outings to Prince's Island and the spacious grounds of the William Pearce residence, and attended concerts and moving pictures suitable for children at the Grand, Regent and Allen Theatres.²⁰ It was difficult to measure the impact of all of this recreational activity on the boys and girls. Sometimes they did not seem to fit in at the gatherings outside the shelter. The shelter staff could only hope that the adventures would bring a few moments of joy into their unhappy lives.

The Society considered it particularly important to look after the health of the neglected children both inside and outside the shelter. It was firm in its insistence that nothing would give the child more

security than good health. Accordingly, it called upon physicians to visit the sick boys and girls in their homes as well as those in the shelter. The response from the medical profession was encouraging and many a child received treatment in his or her home. Some of the most serious cases were treated in the General and Holy Cross hospitals. All children were examined by a physician before they were taken into care at the shelter, so that the nurses on duty would know what treatment to apply to the ailing ones and so that the others could be protected from disease. The treatment of defective tonsils, adenoids, ringworm and deformed feet were among the commonest. While over a dozen city doctors and dentists gave their skills and their knowledge to the healing of the sick children, the ear, eye and nose specialist Dr. A.T. Spankie and the dentist Dr. J.E. McDonald were especially active in this work.²¹ All of them served without remuneration, thus underscoring the fact that the medical arm of the Society was heavily dependent upon voluntary efforts.

Although the matron, who was always a nurse, and the assistant nurses of the shelter were paid for their services, they, like the visiting physicians and dentists, went far beyond the call of duty in providing health care for the children in the shelter. They spent long hours not only in treating the children's ailments but also in attending to the children themselves. They realized that what the boys and girls needed was the healing of the soul as well as the healing of the body. Comforting words were usually needed just as much as medical treatment. None of the children required more attention than the pale-faced infants suffering from malnutrition, and the nurses drew satisfaction from watching these frail babies improve under tender care and a balanced diet and gradually develop into healthy youngsters.²² In spite of all the efforts of the nurses, each year there were several deaths at the shelter. In 1914, for instance, six of the 560 boys and girls received into care at the shelter died. The following year nine of the 682 died. In the eyes of the Society this was not a bad record, for it was obvious that some of the children admitted to the shelter were physically run down and very sick.

If there was a time when the power of the Society to help sick and unfortunate children was stretched to the limit, it was during the influenza epidemic at the end of 1918 and early in 1919.²³ Confronted with the responsibility of protecting children who had lost one or both parents because of the flu, the Society wasted no time in taking as many of these boys and girls as it could into the shelter. Owing to the continuing appeal for care for children whose families had become flu victims, it co-operated with the Calgary School Board and Dr. C.S. Mahood, the city's medical health officer and a long-time friend of the Society, in fitting out the Stanley Jones School on the north hill as a temporary

care centre. Under the supervision of Miss M.L. Cook, a nurse of the shelter, about fifty children were given care there.²⁴ Although the sick children were separated from the healthy ones, the disease ran through every room of the Stanley Jones School and the shelter, infecting most of the boys and girls. Thanks to the excellent nursing, relatively few of the flu patients in these places died. But the nurses themselves did not fare so well. Before the epidemic had run its course Miss Mildred Clint, matron at the shelter since 1914, and Miss Winnifred Huggard, an assistant nurse at Stanley Jones, had died of the disease.

The Calgary Children's Aid Shelter, despite its services and sacrifices, was hated by some of the boys and girls—so much so that they ran away. They could not accept the shelter, with its emphasis on responsible behaviour and self-improvement, as a home. But however much it failed as a home, it rescued the children from poverty and intolerable surroundings, temporarily offered them more comfort, and introduced them to civilized living. The shelter, said superintendent A.M. Macdonald in 1918, was an institution where many neglected children received "their first instructions in living normal lives in contact with other people, in how to properly care for their physical requirements, to clothe themselves, and even how to deport themselves at a properly arranged table."²⁵

III

Although the Children's Protection Act of Alberta of 1909 provided for the organization of juvenile courts, the Calgary Children's Aid Society was not immediately prepared to carry out this part of the Act. Its reluctance to do so undoubtedly arose in part out of its feeling that it did not wish to take on more work than it could handle well. In the beginning the leaders of the Society were preoccupied with matters at the shelter, and there was little time for anything else. Then, too, police chief Thomas Mackie was still able to deal with the juvenile offenders at the police court. In June 1910 he told the Society that delinquent children were always brought before him at the police court on Saturday so that they would not miss any school.²⁶ It was a private hearing, with only the child and a witness appearing before the police chief. At this time he had eighteen boys on probation. He worked closely with R.B. Chadwick, the provincial superintendent of neglected children in Edmonton, sending him weekly reports on the boys' school attendance, their bedtime and their general deportment. No one questioned the value of the work at the police court, but it became too heavy as the number of cases of juvenile delinquency increased with the rapid growth of the city. Moreover, as the years passed the Society came to realize that something more was needed.²⁷ What was called for was a children's court, whose sole purpose would be to meet the needs of boys and girls.

The moment was ripe for the Society to use its judicial powers, and in April 1912 it was happy to see the Alberta government establish a juvenile court in Calgary.²⁸ The government appointed a staff of men and women who would work together to make the court into a viable judicial institution. Among those who served as judges of the court between 1912 and 1918 were F.D. Beveridge, a real estate agent; T.A.P. Frost, an alderman and a Baptist clergyman; Mrs. Alice Jane Jamieson; and Mrs. Annie Elizabeth Langford. Other long-time members of the court team were the probation officers A.D. McDonald (secretary and agent of the Society who also served as the clerk of the court), Mrs. Effie A. Bagnall, Mrs. Mary I. Matheson, and J.R. Royce, a justice of the peace and a former Mounted Policeman. It must be added that the need for the appointment of women to the court was at first not grasped by the government, but as time went on the male members by themselves proved inadequate in dealing with the juvenile girls, and consequently women were added to the staff, with Mrs. Bagnall and Mrs. Matheson becoming probation officers at the end of 1912 and in the spring of 1916 respectively, and Mrs. Jamieson and Mrs. Langford being made judges in mid-1915. A further development occurred in the fall of 1914, when the Society organized a juvenile court committee which consisted of over thirty citizens who volunteered to assist in the work outside the court.²⁹ Under the leadership of J.M. Sharpe, president of the YMCA, these citizens maintained contact with the children after their court hearings in order to encourage them to stay out of trouble and lead useful lives.

In a sense the juvenile court was another expression of a generous community that had considerable capacity for voluntary labour. The judges, like the juvenile court committee, did their job without remuneration. True, it took only a relatively small portion of their time each week. Yet they worked at it week after week and year after year. In contrast, the probation officers devoted all of their working days to this work and were accordingly paid for their services. But they, too, were tireless in their efforts to save deprived children.

Gradually the court settled into a routine, with regular sessions being held every Monday morning in secretary A.D. McDonald's office in the city hall.³⁰ Occasionally, when the case load became heavy, there were additional sessions during other days of the week. As a rule only one judge presided over the court, though sometimes the hearing took place before two judges. Once the women judges were appointed, they usually presided over the trials of girls. Besides the delinquent child and the judge, A.D. McDonald as the clerk of the court and as the chief probation officer was always present at the trials. Often one of the other probation officers was present to assist him. In some cases the parents of the delinquent child were summoned by the judge to attend the trial, as he felt that their presence might help to set matters

right. To protect the child from pressures associated with public trials in adult courts, the general public was excluded from all the hearings.

For all the power the federal Juvenile Delinquents Act of 1908 gave to the juvenile court, including the power to inquire into the life of the child, hold hearings, and put the child into a foster home or a detention home or an industrial school, the court exercised its authority with care. It encouraged the probation officers to settle as many cases as possible out of court, for it preferred to avoid a permanent mark on the child's record. The Alberta Juvenile Courts Act of 1913 required the probation officers to seek a fair trial for every child they brought before the court by making a preliminary investigation and by reporting fully on each case to the judge, and A.D. McDonald and his assistants did all they could to ensure that the requirements of this Act were fulfilled.³¹ On the whole, even-handed justice prevailed. Not all the children who made an appearance in court were found to be juvenile delinquents. In 1913 there were 475 cases, of which 326 were delinquency cases; there were 315 out of 462 in 1914; 213 out of 336 in 1918; and 201 out of 336 in 1919. The rest were regarded by the judges as cases of neglect. Believing that it was possible to rehabilitate delinquent children without taking away their liberty, the court made use of an industrial school only when all else failed and sent only a few older, persistent offenders there.

The Calgary juvenile court was sure it was not being unreasonable in committing to an industrial school less than one per cent of those boys who appeared before it each year. Owing to the lack of such a school in Alberta, the court, by special arrangement between the Alberta and Manitoba governments, sent the delinquent boys who proved to be too much for the probation officers to the Industrial Training School for boys at Portage La Prairie, where they were given instruction in farming and in trades like carpentry, as well as in academic subjects.³²

For the Calgary Children's Aid Society, however, the Portage La Prairie school was not wholly satisfactory.³³ The chief problem was the cost. To keep each boy there the Society paid \$2.48 a day, and the expenses for travel to the school and back home again came to about \$100. Another major difficulty was that the distance between the school and the boy's home was so great that his parents found it impossible to visit him. The natural home was therefore virtually eliminated as one of the sources of strength that the boy could look to in trying to straighten out his life. The remedy in the eyes of the Society was an industrial school in Alberta, complete with farmland and several cottages for boys and several for girls. The Alberta government, while it again and again received requests from the Society to establish a school in the province, did not act. Hence the problem of the suitability

of the Portage La Prairie school remained to vex the Society. True, the number of Calgary boys involved in this problem was very small. Yet because they were the most serious cases heard before the court, it had good reason to be concerned about their future.

At the same time, the court was undoubtedly also concerned about the many boys who could be dealt with by the probation officers right in Calgary. Delinquency was most widespread among the boys between the ages of twelve and fifteen, and theft was the crime they most frequently committed. Sometimes stealing was a reflection of an impoverished home which gave the boy few opportunities and drove him to seek to improve himself economically through unlawful means. But some boys turned to theft even though they lived in fairly comfortable circumstances, as was the case with most of the ten boys who were involved, in May 1913, in breaking into the Dominion Grocery store and a cigar shop on Seventeenth Avenue West.³⁴ Almost all of the boys' fathers made good the losses, and the offenders were given a chance to mend their ways. Similarly, in 1918 the parents of a gang of boys who called themselves "The Black Seven" and whose thefts amounted to \$300 repaid the owners, and the boys under the guidance of the probation officers showed improvement in their behaviour.³⁵ In both instances the parents could apparently afford to pay. Juvenile delinquency, then, crossed class lines, reaching into middle-class homes as well as into poor homes.

Damage to property was one of the main offences committed by boys. Typical of the ways in which the juvenile court handled the problem of damage to property was the session on May 28, 1917.³⁶ One youngster was found guilty of breaking a window valued at \$84, and the case was settled when his mother agreed to replace the window. For each of the five boys involved in damaging gardens the sentence was ten hours of hard labour in gardens. For four out of the five juveniles who confessed to minor destruction of property, the fines ranged from \$1 to \$5, and the damage money to be paid by each was set at \$1.25. The fifth boy was let off with a warning. These punishments were clearly measured out according to the kind and the degree of destruction. They were also intended to discourage further delinquency, but they were not looked upon by the court as a final cure. The probation officers would still be needed to give personal attention to the boys and help them not to stray into wrongdoing again.

Many of the hearings conducted by the juvenile court were concerned with the violation of child labour laws. Children under fifteen were forbidden by the Alberta Factories Act to enter the industrial labour force, but some parents were partly dependent upon the earnings of their under-age children and encouraged them to work in factories, laundries and restaurants. Boys and girls, often those who were

not getting on well at school, were themselves glad to find early employment. No matter how hard A.D. McDonald, the city police, and the provincial factories inspector worked at attempting to keep children out of the labour force, there were still some who evaded the Act.³⁷

The city by-law prohibiting children without a permit from participating in amateur performances at the theatres was likewise ignored by some boys and girls. Moreover, although no child under the age of ten was given a permit, in August 1917 the probation officers found several children under ten performing in the Princess and Empress Theatres.³⁸ A.D. McDonald was worried by pressure on him from needy mothers to recommend permits for their children. One mother wanted her six-year-old child to perform in the Princess Theatre, and another woman sought permission to have her daughter, aged eleven, sing at the Empress Theatre even though this might damage her health. Neither child received a permit. Feeling that the situation was getting somewhat out of hand, the Children's Aid executive passed a motion deploring the practice of boys and girls toiling on the stage.³⁹ Since it was impossible to stop the practice, McDonald had no choice but to try to regulate it as best he could.

Of the various kinds of child workers, the street labourers like the newsboys and the messenger boys were the most difficult to control. The need to control the employment of boys by newspapers and telegraph offices had been recognized as early as 1912.⁴⁰ In that year city council passed a by-law requiring newsboys and messengers to have a licence and wear a badge. No boy under the age of twelve could take out a licence. But the by-law was not easy to enforce, especially when it came to newboys. A street trade as full of promise of adventure and quick returns as the selling of newspapers was bound to attract younger boys. Many of these boys, having poor parents, were driven into the newspaper business by necessity. In 1914 there were forty-two trials in the juvenile court for the breach of the newsboys' licence by-law, and in the following years this continued to be one of the chief offences with which the court was concerned.⁴¹ The boys hurt most by the job of selling papers were the small, ill-fed and poorly-clothed children, too weak to tramp the streets for long hours.

Far fewer girls than boys were brought before the juvenile court for delinquency. It was obviously a time when the lives of girls were more sheltered. The delinquency cases consisted of twenty-three girls and 293 boys in 1913, twenty-four girls and 289 boys in 1914, and eight girls and 205 boys in 1918. Most of the girls were on trial for sex immorality, as unwed mothers, as prostitutes, or as persons involved in some other form of immoral behaviour.⁴² Representative of the girls appearing in court was a fourteen-year-old girl who admitted in April

1914 that she had stayed with a man all night following a drive in an automobile with him. Upon being asked by Judge T.A.P. Frost to provide the court with more information, she stated that "in almost any garage in the city you will find young girls spending the night. Four nights out of the week young girls are to be found staying all night after being taken for rides by chauffeurs. I know of several cases where girls have done so, and have been told about other cases."⁴³ The girl apparently was sent home to her mother, though she remained for some time under the supervision of the probation officers. In most cases the girls were either returned to their parents or placed in other private homes. If such private accommodation was not available or if the girl's own home was deemed unsuitable, she was usually sent to the Presbyterian Social Service Home on Fifteenth Avenue West where she was given care and where she, not infrequently, gained a new sense of self-respect.

The Calgary juvenile court did not lose interest in delinquent boys and girls after it had disposed of their cases. Since it conceived of itself as an agent of reform, dedicated to preventing children from becoming criminals and to helping those who had broken the law, it attached a great deal of importance to the idea of probation. Freedom, it believed, ought to be offered to all offenders, providing they were willing to abandon their old habits and, under the guidance of probation officers, follow a useful life. In fashioning its system of probation, the court consciously drew upon eastern Canadian, American and British experience. From these older communities it had learned that the probation officers and the citizens who assisted them had to become big brothers and big sisters to the boys and the girls, visiting them in their own homes or foster homes, teaching them to be industrious at home and at school, and directing them towards wholesome amusements. If the power of the court to place children on probation in their natural homes or foster homes was real, so was the desire of the probation officers and the big brothers and the big sisters to see them taken off probation and given a chance to live normally as soon as possible.

Happily for the Children's Aid, it could demonstrate that despite its failure to help all the children who came under its care it was a positive force for many of them. The story of a young soldier, as reported by A. D. McDonald in 1916, illustrated how the combined efforts of the shelter, the court, the probation system and the foster home made teenage boys into useful citizens:

Nearly five years ago [this young man] was one of the worst little outlaws that ever came to us from Southern Alberta. He distinguished himself by frequently running away and gave us all a world of trouble. He was looked upon as a hopeless case, especially by the Matron, who predicted for him a bad and tragic end. But with all his faults there was lots of good in the boy. After

a time, under the firm, wise discipline in a good foster home, the better instincts of the boy prevailed, and he is now making good in the ranks. One night I went to the Station to meet a child who was being sent in from a distant point, and the party who had the child in charge was this same outlaw of a few years ago, now wearing the King's uniform and every inch a soldier!⁴⁴

By 1916 there were over twenty former Calgary Children's Aid boys serving in the Canadian Army.

While the principal function of the juvenile court was to hear the cases of boys and girls, it also had jurisdiction over the parents of the children with whom it dealt. Though not a regular family court, it did hold hearings for parents. Since the families with difficulties such as quarreling between parents, unfaithfulness, desertion, and the death of one of the parents all too often produced neglected or delinquent children, the court was concerned about what happened in the home. But the many unstable homes were depressing. Moreover, the authority of the court over parents was limited. Certain developments in the field of family welfare, however, were good news for the court. As a result of an amendment to the Criminal Code in 1918, the court found it easier to bring to the bar of justice parents or other persons suspected of contributing to the neglect or delinquency of a child. Needy mothers whose husbands had died or had been mentally disabled could claim, under the Alberta Mothers' Allowance Act of 1919, a monthly allowance from the provincial government. Such mothers could now feed and clothe their children.

Meanwhile, the juvenile court came to the assistance of the home in need through the probation system. The customary procedure in the case of parents who sometimes gave inadequate care to their children but whose home was not considered a failure was that the court placed the home under the supervision of a probation officer. In 1917 there was, for example, a mother addicted to drugs, neglectful at times, but still able to care for her young daughter.⁴⁵ She was permitted to keep her child upon promising that she would stop taking drugs. To ensure that the child would receive better care in the future, the home was placed under supervision. In the same year, someone informed the Children's Aid that returned soldiers were occasionally visiting the home of a mother with three small children in the absence of her husband.⁴⁶ Although a visit to the home by a lady probation officer revealed a tidy house and no evidence of serious neglect, the reported goings-on of the mother were enough to have the home placed under the watchful eye of the probation officer. Again, the mother was allowed to keep her children. Quite clearly, the policy of the Children's Aid was that the remedy for family difficulties should first of all be sought within the home and that the break-up of the home should be avoided as long as there was a reasonable prospect of saving it.

Sometimes it was impossible to prevent the disruption of the home, as in the case of the husband and wife whose quarrels contributed to their two young sons being sadly neglected and led in 1912 to the removal of the boys from their home by the juvenile court, both of them finding a temporary home in the shelter.⁴⁷ Within several months the court, believing that the domestic trouble was over, returned the boys to their parents, but it was not long before the home proved to be unsatisfactory again. The outcome was that the court placed the boys in foster homes. For the mother, whose health had broken in the meantime, the separation from her sons was particularly painful, and for years she begged the Children's Aid Society to allow them to live at home. But the Society was not convinced that the home was fit for them. Accordingly, it refused to grant her request. Occasionally in cases of discord between husbands and wives the probation officers succeeded in persuading couples to settle their differences and sign an agreement in which they expressed their renewed faith in each other, thereby saving the home from disruption and making it a fit place for children to live.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, the numerous domestic disputes that the Children's Aid was faced with, the shortage of probation officers, and the reluctance of husbands and wives to accept wise counsel made the task of keeping families together difficult.

IV

During the immediate post-war years the Calgary Children's Aid Society was so overwhelmed by troubles that its work had to be taken over by the city in 1920. In the midst of high prices, unemployment, poverty, and the return of veterans to civilian life, there was an increase in juvenile crime.⁴⁹ There were more delinquent boys and girls than the juvenile court and the probation officers could handle. Collecting enough money to enable the Society to operate was becoming harder, for between 1917 and 1919 the costs jumped from \$16,500 to \$32,500.⁵⁰ The income from voluntary contributions was only a small fraction of what was needed. The provincial government gave more after the war, but the bulk of the funds still came from the city. Indeed, the dependence of the Society upon the city was increasing. In these circumstances it was not surprising that city council became more preoccupied with the Society's business. The situation was complicated by the fact that the members of the Society's executive could no longer agree on the most appropriate way to spend the funds available to them. Some supported president W. M. Connacher in pushing ahead with improvements on the shelter which had long been inadequate for the growing number of children in need of care. Others felt that some of the money spent on the shelter could have been put to better use in funding community centre work, since they saw it as an effective way of

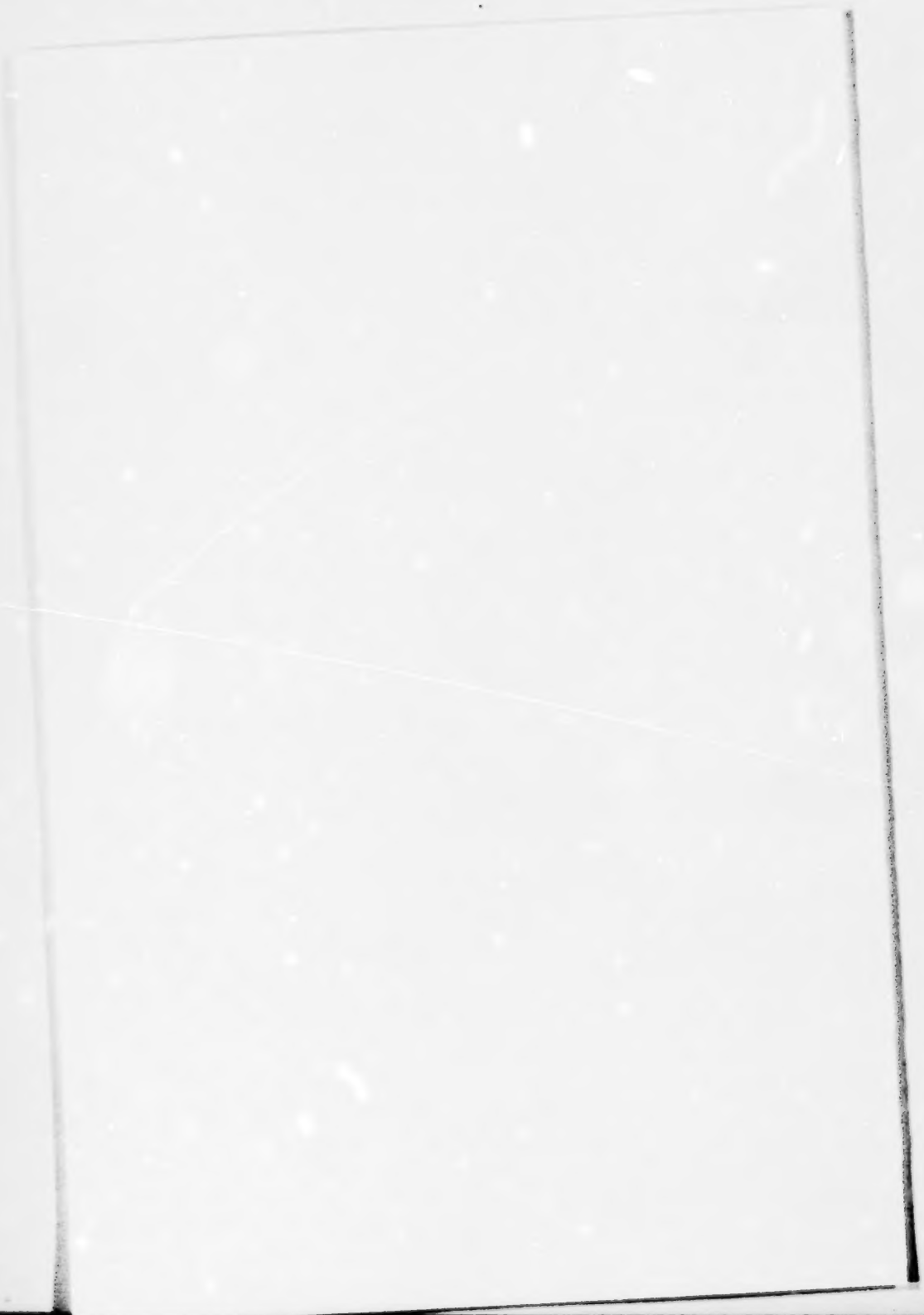
preventing juvenile crime. Ultimately, the overriding feeling on all sides was that the work of caring for deprived children had become too much for the Children's Aid Society, and in June, 1920, it turned over its affairs to the city of Calgary and quietly went out of existence.

What had the decade of Children's Aid Society done for the city? Simply put, a good deal. But in its last moments, the Society was not given its due, at least not in public. True, it was an example of a voluntary agency that did not have the resources to sustain itself in the long run. Yet the Society provided the city with its first child-saving program, maintaining this program through the difficult war years, through the flu epidemic, and through the early stages of post-war reconstruction. Although some children and parents resented the firm hand of the Society, wishing it would leave them alone, many responded positively to its guidance. The authority of the Society was seen as a blessing by a city which wanted to build a community free from the excesses spawned by neglect. The city was fully aware of the threat that neglectful parents and delinquent children could be to a community, the threat being the loss of freedom and the loss of opportunities. The great virtue of the Society lay in its capacity to impress upon the citizens the need to co-operate in enlarging the opportunities of unfortunate boys and girls. In the process the city was taught something about how to cope with unstable homes and juvenile crime. Of course it still had much to learn in the matter of saving children, as the future would reveal.

NOTES

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- ⁴ *Calgary Herald*, July 15, 1913; *Albertan*, October 13, 1913 and November 25, 1913.
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- ⁶ *Calgary Herald*, August 29, 1908 and September 2, 1908.
- ⁷ *Calgary Herald*, November 25, 1902, December 31, 1907, and August 29, 1908.
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- ⁹ *Albertan*, February 28, 1913.
- ¹⁰ *Calgary Herald*, February 15, 1909.

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- ¹² *Edmonton Journal*, June 26, 1915.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, June 19, 1915.
- ¹⁴ *Albertian*, October 22, 1949.
- ¹⁵ Minute Book, Children's Aid Society of Calgary, 1909-1920, February 15, 1909; Glenbow-Alberta Institute Archives, City Clerk's Papers, *Annual Report of the Children's Aid Society of Calgary*, 1914, pp. 1-11.
- ¹⁶ Minute Book, Children's Aid Society of Calgary, 1909-1920, January 22, 1910.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, October 10, 1911.
- ¹⁸ *Annual Report of the Department of Neglected Children*, 1918.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰ Minute Book, Children's Aid Society of Calgary, 1909-1920, August 13, 1914, March 8, 1917; City Clerk's Papers, *Annual Report of the Children's Aid Society of Calgary*, 1915, p. 11.
- ²¹ *Annual Report of the Children's Aid Society of Calgary*, 1914, p. 15; *Annual Report of the Children's Aid Society of Calgary*, 1915, p. 8; *Annual Report of the Department of Neglected Children*, 1918.
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- ²⁴ *Calgary Herald*, November 12, 1918; *Annual Report of the Department of Neglected Children*, 1918.
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- ⁴⁷ Provincial Archives of Alberta, Accession 75-126, Edmonton, August 28, 1918, A. M. McDonald to Acting Deputy Attorney General W. Forbes.
- ⁴⁸ *Annual Report of the Children's Aid Society of Calgary*, 1915, p. 6.
- ⁴⁹ City Clerk's Papers, Calgary, April 22, 1919, A. D. McDonald to Mayor R. C. Marshall.
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15. VANCOUVER: "THE MECCA OF THE UNEMPLOYED," 1907-1929¹

PATRICIA E. ROY

In the early years of the twentieth century, Vancouver dominated a vast hinterland stretching from nearby points in coastal British Columbia, through the interior, north to the Yukon, and east to the Prairie provinces. The obverse of metropolitan status was the tendency of workers in the hinterland's primary industries to regard Vancouver with its mild winter climate as a mecca in the off-season or in hard times. The problem of the single unemployed man in Vancouver in the 1930s is well-known, even if only as background for the "On-to-Ottawa Trek" or as the setting for several novels. Yet almost every unemployment problem Vancouver suffered in the 1930s had a precedent during the previous three decades. Nevertheless, despite her extensive experience with unemployment and the co-operation of senior governments in providing some financial assistance for public works projects or direct relief, Vancouver could not solve the problem.

The unemployment situation was particularly critical when the transient unemployed appeared to be organized or when civic resources were already strained by unemployment among permanent residents. Although Vancouver officials admitted that other Canadian cities were often worse off, they believed their problems were unique because of the high proportion of transient, able-bodied, single men on the unemployment rolls and their predilection for dramatic confrontation with authority when they were denied relief. Local officials might blame "outside" or "alien" agitators for unrest, but most relief applicants were of Canadian or British origin. The seasonal migration of the unemployed was an unfortunate by-product of metropolitan status, not an alien plot.

In good times, the seasonally unemployed were welcome to enjoy Vancouver's relatively mild winter climate and metropolitan amenities. By carefully managing their summer earnings made in logging and mining camps, on the fishing grounds, or on railway construction, they could afford to spend the winter in cheap Vancouver hotels and cafes. If their earnings had been thin or their thirst exceeded their savings, several private missions provided beds, bathing facilities, and meals.² When a large number of unemployed overtaxed the resources of these

agencies, the city occasionally granted direct relief, that is a dole, but the preferred method of aiding large numbers of unemployed was a job at below-standard wages on some public work.

The first decade of the twentieth century was generally prosperous, but as part of the general recession of 1907 Vancouver suffered a problem well known in eastern cities. The construction boom within the city suddenly halted and hinterland industries shut down. "A month ago," reported the December 1907 issue of *Westward Ho! Magazine*, "everything was booming, now nearly all native industries have closed down. Smelting, lumbering and logging are at a complete standstill, and mining has been reduced by at least two-thirds." Most of the unemployed coming to Vancouver were British immigrants who had been in Canada an average of two years. Many had worked on prairie harvesting or threshing crews and had spent their savings getting to Vancouver. Since the city confined its relief work to married men who had permanent residence in Vancouver and single men who had been in the city for some time, the transients soon overwhelmed such agencies as the Salvation Army. In early December, an apparently spontaneously-organized group of two to three hundred men gathered outside the City Hall, which was located near many of the cheaper hotels and not far from a popular outdoor meeting place, the Powell Street grounds. Spokesmen for the unemployed asked the city to establish a public works programme and a municipal employment bureau. Otherwise, they explained, their only choice was to starve or steal. Police Chief Chamberlain reinforced their argument when he warned City Council of the difficulty of controlling meetings of the unemployed.³

Vancouver City Council responded to these entreaties. It set aside \$3,000 to provide temporary work at 20¢ per hour or \$1.80 per day under the Board of Works and the city engineer; it set up a labour bureau to distribute job information; it fitted up the old City Gaol as primitive sleeping quarters; it provided meal tickets; and it asked the provincial government to hire men to develop nearby government lands.⁴

Civic authorities feared possible abuses of the system. They were concerned that free meals and sleeping quarters might be a magnet for the unemployed generally and especially such "undesirable characters" as robbers from American centres. (The movement of the unemployed was not entirely in one direction; many of Vancouver's unemployed headed south of the border.) The main objective of city officials was to make men work for their keep. Superintendent McMahon of the City Relief and Employment Bureau complained that unauthorized charities, chiefly ladies operating refreshment depots, were encouraging men not to work, and he asked them to confine their philanthropy to

married men with families. The city required men whose situation was not urgent to prove their worthiness by working before they received meal tickets. Any man who refused to work faced the possibility of a vagrancy charge. Foreigners were referred to their consuls for assistance or placed in detention pending deportation. In fact, federal immigration authorities found it more economical to detain men rather than to deport them since they expected there would be plentiful work in the spring. Despite these safeguards, the Board of Works complained that the policy of relief work was attracting "hoboes" and "grafters" to Vancouver; Police Chief Chamberlain graphically noted, "we are now looking after a lot of stiffies no good to themselves or anybody else... [who] would not work if they got a chance."⁵

Nevertheless, the work test discouraged some applicants for relief and apparently encouraged others to leave the city. The problem was ultimately solved in the spring of 1908 when North America began to recover from the depression. In early March one large employer reported that there was "work for every man in the country" and that the railways were looking outside for additional help.⁶ The city closed its relief bureau and shelter and offered relief only to the incapacitated. During the winter of 1907-8 Vancouver had established its basic response to the transient unemployed: they would not be allowed to starve; they were expected to prove their worthiness by working for relief; and, preferably, a senior government rather than city ratepayers would pay for that work.

In the winter of 1911-12, Vancouver again experienced a large influx of unemployed. By the end of December, 318 men had applied for meal and bed tickets. In January the Associated Charities, a civic agency co-ordinating the work of private citizens and the city relief department, issued 34,901 meal tickets and 9,276 bed tickets. Many of the unemployed had walked to Vancouver from the interior; others had come on cheap fares from the Prairies at the end of the harvesting season. Several civic and immigration officials insisted that most of the unemployed were "of the right type," were of British or Canadian origin, and wanted work, not charity. Citizens accepted the duty of easing the suffering of the unemployed and formed new charitable organizations such as the Good Samaritan Society to provide bed and board for men in temporary distress. Nevertheless, most Vancouver residents agreed with successful mayoralty candidate James Findlay that the city's primary obligation was to care for its own and for British subjects, and that by providing shelter and food the city risked becoming a mecca for the useless and undesirable of North America. What especially upset citizens were a concomitant "epidemic of burglary and highway robbery" blamed on "desperadoes from across the boundary line" and well-organized marches through downtown streets by men

carrying banners proclaiming themselves to be "The Unemployed." These marches and street meetings, said to be organized by Socialists or by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), impeded downtown traffic and created such a vivid impression that an interior newspaper was moved to comment that the "scum of the earth" had gathered in Vancouver, "the last point in the West."⁷

Mayor Findlay did not believe that many of the paraders were "too anxious to secure honest work"; the City Relief Officer was so convinced of this that he suggested using a rock pile as a work test to eliminate three-quarters of the applicants for relief. Under pressure from the city's clergy, led by Roman Catholic Archbishop Neil McNeil and Reverend Lashley Hall, a prominent Methodist, the city did offer jobs on park development and sewer construction to a few hundred "deserving unemployed" and made provision to care for another two to three thousand. To insure that the unemployed were "deserving" and not loafers, the Police Commission established a chain gang for vagrants.⁸

Civic officials believed unemployment was merely an excuse for Socialist and IWW agitators to attack the existing political system. The fact that most demonstrations were held on a Saturday evening or on a Sunday when most workingmen had free time lent credibility to this notion. Thus, the Board of Police Commissioners instructed the Police Chief "to eliminate all street parades, gatherings of men on the streets, and public speaking of any kind whatsoever, and to do anything necessary to protect the public and preserve the peace of the City," including the swearing in of special constables. That weekend, police broke up two "unemployed" meetings and charged some of the participants with inciting to riot, obstructing police and the streets, and using obscene language. After these arrests, the organizers, with the assistance of the IWW, turned their campaign into a fight for "free speech." Over the next three weekends, police confronted the demonstrators at indoor and outdoor meetings and continued to lay charges. So many came to watch the proceedings that Mayor Findlay warned citizens that police could not "distinguish or discriminate" between the mob and otherwise innocent and respectable citizens. He advised curiosity-seekers to leave as soon as police ordered an assembly to break up. His admonition had little effect. Up to 10,000 people gathered at some of the open air meetings. At one meeting at Prospect Point in Stanley Park, the crowd listened to speakers using megaphones to address them from gasoline launches cruising off shore.⁹

The persistence of the demonstrations persuaded the mayor and the Police Commission to meet representatives of the Trades and Labour Council but not of the IWW. Civic officials denied any opposition to free speech but explained that they could not allow "aliens" to

come into the city, incite riots, and preach sedition. On the fifth weekend of the demonstrations, however, both the Police Commission and the "free speakers" deliberately avoided confrontation. The police permitted soapbox orators to perform at the Powell Street grounds on condition they make no seditious or inflammatory statements. A crowd of 10,000, including "babes in arms," gathered to see the confrontation. The orators confined their speeches "to the shopworn doctrines of the street Socialists but the police who stood in readiness did not intervene. The crowd seemed disappointed as the first Sunday in a month passed without a disturbance."¹⁰

The coming of spring temporarily relieved unemployment. Nevertheless, Mayor Findlay boasted his firm action had prevented further difficulties. He also recommended giving wide publicity, especially in the United States, to the lack of winter work in Vancouver as a means of limiting the annual influx of the unemployed. By the summer of 1913, unemployment was demonstrably more than a seasonal problem. Yet, the time-lag involved in immigration meant that British immigrants, chiefly urban workers, were still entering the city. In the summer of 1913, one of the chief activities of the Progress Club, a booster organization, was attempting to put newcomers in touch with possible employers. By fall, exceptionally "tight" money sharply reduced construction activity, but the city's surprising success in selling some bonds enabled it to implement a winter works programme for married men. When regular work did not take up the slack, Council used some by-law money to hire needy men at \$2.00 per day, or two-thirds the normal rate for day labour, to clear streets in the former Hastings Townsite. Preference in employment was given to city residents and married men. The low pay spread limited funds more widely and was deliberately designed not to make the city a "rendezvous" for the unemployed of the province or refugees from railway construction camps. These relief projects provided jobs for only about 500 men; the trade unions, who represented only skilled workers, reported 2,500 of their members were out of work and others had only part-time work. Most of the unemployed were married men; the single men had left town, for their only hope of sustenance was to get a bed and meals at one of the rescue missions. The limited work schemes, private charities, and special efforts to hire local people on railway construction eased the unemployment problem for some, but the economy continued to deteriorate. Some firms went out of business, others reduced their staffs or put them on short time.¹¹

Throughout Canada, the financial impact of the outbreak of war in August 1914 caused severe unemployment. Although Vancouver's problems were not as great as those in eastern cities such as Montreal and Toronto, the cessation of railway construction, especially on the

Pacific Great Eastern, shutdowns in mining and logging, and an influx of men who "had been hounded away from the prairies by mounted police" sharply increased the number of unemployed in the fall of 1914 even though many single men, normally employed in the building trades, were leaving for Britain or the Antipodes, some men were enlisting in the army, and many Hindus and Chinese were returning home. Many of the unemployed belonged to the "deserving class" who wanted work, not charity, in order to relieve their wives and children from hunger and want. Many, indeed, were white-collar workers or skilled building tradesmen who were unaccustomed to unemployment. At the end of 1914, Mayor T. S. Baxter estimated that of 4,000 unemployed in the city all but 200 members of the "hobo element" were "meritoriously deserving of assistance." The overwhelming majority of the applicants for aid were of Canadian or British origin, but their proportion was exaggerated by the feeling of some civic officials that it was impossible to tell if many of the Europeans who drifted into the city really needed help, and by the practice of ignoring the needs of Asians for unemployment relief.¹²

To administer relief as efficiently as possible, the city co-operated with interested organizations such as the Trades and Labour Council, the Board of Trade, the churches, and the Victorian Order of Nurses to establish the Employment and Relief Association. The general principles were thorough investigation, co-ordination of all relief work, indirect relief through employment, the work test, and a follow-up system. The Association raised only \$6,000 in private donations from the business community but received some donations in kind and eliminated most overlapping. During the winter of 1914-15 the Association spent over \$72,000 on direct relief, mainly in the form of meal and bed tickets, and another \$75,000 on providing direct relief work. Most of the latter sum was obtained from a special war assessment in the form of pay cuts for regular city employees. The provincial government decreed that the municipalities must deal with their own unemployed but offered loans in certain circumstances.¹³

Relief work took several forms but it was always designed to serve only those who were truly in need. Over eighty men were set to work cutting cordwood on nearby provincial land. The scheme was designed to provide them with some income and to avoid a possible fuel shortage. They were paid on a piecework basis. A recent amendment to the Criminal Code protecting logs that had broken away from booms prevented extending the scheme to the cutting of driftwood. The largest relief work scheme employed men to improve roads, parks, and the grounds of the Vancouver General Hospital. Since more men sought relief work than there were jobs, preference was given to married men whose needs had been ascertained by a public health nurse who visited

their homes. Some single men were accommodated at a land-clearing camp in neighbouring Burnaby where they received board, lodging, and 25¢ per day in return for clearing a cemetery site. To prove their worthiness, the men were expected to walk the eight miles from the city centre to the camp. When city work was available, single men and foreigners were required to work a half day for 37½¢ worth of meal tickets; when it was not, they were saved from starvation by tickets entitling them to a bowl of soup and some bread or a large mug of coffee and three buns. City Relief Officer Ireland continued to discourage private soup kitchens because they benefited those who preferred begging to working.¹⁴

To the individual recipient, this relief was niggardly and the inquisition to which he was subjected was reminiscent of charity; to the ratepayers collectively, the cost of feeding up to 2,400 individuals daily was a heavy burden especially since the city was also caring for some five or six hundred families. Moreover, many ratepayers themselves were unemployed or suffering from reduced incomes. Some ratepayers had lost their homes when they could not meet payments; some children were kept home from school because they had no shoes. Mayor L. D. Taylor argued that Vancouver citizens must come first, and that single men rather than families should suffer the burden of unemployment.¹⁵

Since at least two-thirds (and possibly up to ninety per cent) of the single men had no claim to Vancouver residency, City Council insisted that relief should be a provincial responsibility. By mid-February the city claimed to have spent \$14,000 on single men who had no claim on it and asked the province for reimbursement. The provincial government promised a \$5,000 grant but neglected to make it clear that the cheque would not be forthcoming before the new fiscal year began on April 1. In the meantime, City Council recommended discontinuing general relief even though Relief Officer Ireland noted that the work test was weeding out what he felt were men who did not deserve relief. Members of the Employment and Relief Association argued that the general relief programme had eliminated most begging and crime; the Province observed that relief workers had made significant improvements to city parks.¹⁶

Nevertheless, city funds were running out. Council announced that effective April 1, 1915 it would no longer issue meal tickets to non-resident single men. "All Fool's Day," declared the *World*, "will be locally No Food Day." After Employment and Relief Association spokesmen warned that discontinuing relief would force men to beg or steal and might lead to riots, Council compromised between those who objected to the expense and those who feared riots. It extended the cut-

off date by five days to cover the Easter weekend; and Mayor Taylor, noting that Alberta had given Edmonton a three-month grant of \$22,500 for relief, wired acting-premier W. J. Bowser asking his government to alleviate a serious situation. Within forty-eight hours, the province despatched its previously promised \$5,000 cheque and invited Vancouver representatives to discuss the unemployment problem. Both the cheque and the invitation arrived on April 6. Since the \$5,000 cheque only honoured a previous commitment, Council saw no reason to alter its decision to discontinue relief for transients.¹⁷ Those who could not prove residence had little hope of escape; they were "informal prisoners of war." If they wished to head east or south, the militia would stop them at one of the railway bridges. Moreover, there was no sign of economic improvement.

On the morning of Tuesday, April 6, some eight to nine hundred workingmen gathered at the relief office to attempt to prove six months' residence in the city as a qualification for relief work. The group represented less than half of those who had been securing relief. On the previous Saturday, 2,045 men had stood in the bread line. They were "workers and not shirkers." Of the 1,855 assigned to a few hours work in return for meal tickets, all but sixty-one reported to the appointed place. During the day of April 6, the crowd outside the relief office was occasionally ugly but officials kept it in check. The American consul who was acting for the government of Austria-Hungary had to call for police help when 200 Austrians appeared at his office and demanded food. Shortly before 8 p.m., City Relief Officer Ireland announced that no more meal tickets would be issued, and he asked the crowd to disperse. Before they could do so, one "belligerent" protested. When police took him away, the inflamed crowd moved to Hastings Street, demanded food at two restaurants until driven away by police, looted several fruit stands, and broke some plate glass windows before the onset of rain helped police disperse them. The fact that the ringleaders who were arrested had money in their pockets, that and some of the stolen fruit was used to pelt the police, suggested that the agitators had ulterior motives and were not really hungry, despite the claim of some members of the crowd that they had not eaten for two days.¹⁸

Adding to this wartime drama, several of the arrested men had "foreign" names. The press reported that the majority of the demonstrators were "alien enemies." That foreigners were most affected by the city's decision to cut off relief to the single unemployed seemed evident the next morning when speakers, using a dozen different languages, addressed an outdoor assembly at McLean Park while 500 Italians gathered outside the office of the Italian consulate and Russians met at the Powell Street grounds. The problem of the enemy

alien was easily resolved: Mayor Taylor discovered that they were a federal responsibility, though Attorney-General Bowser believed they might simply be given free passage to the border of the United States (which was still, of course, a neutral power). Deportation, however, was impossible as they were legal immigrants. In fact, enemy aliens were only a small part of the problem; among the approximately 2,000 single unemployed who had received relief there were only fourteen Germans and 214 Austrians.¹⁹

The day after the riot, about 1,000 men, watched carefully by more than fifty city policemen, gathered outside City Hall demanding sustenance while Council held a special session on the relief problem. Council reiterated its decision to grant no further city relief to non-residents and to ask the province again for help. The provincial government reminded Mayor Taylor that "a large centre carries with it responsibilities as well as privileges," that the city could not welcome men with money to spend and expect the province to feed those who had no money. The province recognized the abnormal situation, however, and reluctantly granted the city an additional \$10,000 for relief. By cutting off relief, by creating a dramatic incident, Vancouver City Council had accomplished its goal of getting the province to accept some responsibility for the unemployed.²⁰

With provincial funds on hand, the city resumed its relief work programme for single men on April 9. Two thousand men went back to their four hours of daily work in return for meal and bed tickets. Within a few days, the number of meal tickets was increased but the men were required to work eight hours for them. The objective was to make the city less attractive to transients. Unfortunately for Vancouver, some communities interpreted the provincial grant to mean that the province was accepting responsibility for all unemployment relief. Over the next few days, a number of men, chiefly Italians from Vancouver Island and interior railway camps, arrived in Vancouver claiming they had been sent to the city because the government had given Vancouver money. "Vancouver can and will take care of her own," repeated the *World*, "but other communities must take the responsibility of their own."²¹

When provincial funds ran out on April 26, the city discontinued relief work for non-resident unemployed. Ten days later, the Board of Works recommended laying off all single men in order to conserve funds for married men, but Council overruled them. Mayor Taylor argued that it was more humane and Christian to raise the tax rate a few mills than to allow men to starve. He suggested \$750,000 worth of "full dinner pail" by-laws to improve city facilities and to provide jobs. The ratepayers, however, opposed any measure which might increase taxes or attract any more unemployed to the city. They rejected the

by-laws by a strong majority. Even before the by-law vote, aldermen had rejected Taylor's plans and cut able-bodied single men from the relief rolls to conserve funds for married men with children. Married men also had to pass a strict work test. Any able-bodied man who rejected work sawing shingle bolts or quit his job was denied further relief. Because Italians were suspected of abusing relief, all but Italian families without heads were denied aid until the relief office could conduct a "rigid inspection" of each case.²²

Despite being cut off from relief, the single unemployed did not demonstrate. Their numbers were declining as many had gradually drifted away. They may have hoped the coming of spring would soon improve their condition, they may have been heartened by the beginning of a munitions industry in the city and federal government plans to improve the port, and they may have been demoralized or frightened because the leaders of the April 6 riot had been sentenced to six months hard labour. Undoubtedly, they also realized that neither the provincial government nor the ratepayers had much sympathy for them when King and country called and when the burden of providing relief for families was so great. In the spring of 1916, the unemployment problem began to disappear as a war-induced demand for British Columbia natural resources developed and wartime industries, notably shipbuilding, expanded. Paradoxically, it was during a time of high employment in 1917 and 1918 that the city experienced several widespread labour disputes that added to Vancouver's aura of discontent.²³

The end of the war exacerbated labour unrest throughout Canada; Vancouver still believed that her situation was unique. The demand for provincial products such as minerals and lumber was dropping while the munitions industries were laying off men rapidly and the soldiers were returning from Europe. Despite repeated protests from Mayor R. H. Gale, the federal government allowed soldiers who had enlisted elsewhere to take their discharge in British Columbia where the milder climate of the coast was especially attractive to those who had been wounded or suffered from shell shock. By late March 1919, Gale reported, "our streets are rapidly becoming filled with idle men whose patience is almost at the breaking point."²⁴

Compounding the problem was the "Red Scare" and the labour unrest sweeping North America. In the spring of 1919, when Vancouver experienced a month-long strike in sympathy with the Winnipeg General Strike, many citizens feared revolutionary action, and the army made contingency plans "to preserve law and order and protect life and property."²⁵ Vancouver's strike, however, was remarkably free of violence, and many strikers were unenthusiastic because they realized unemployment was increasing.

Vancouver survived the strike relatively unscathed but unemployment mounted as wartime industries closed. Coughlan's, the largest shipyard, for example, reduced its work force from 3,100 in January 1920 to 1,200 in September. The problem reached crisis proportions by November 1920 when mining, forestry and canning operations closed for the season. In addition, thousands of men ignored warnings to stay away from the coast cities and made their seasonal migration from points as far east as Prince Edward Island. Beginning in late November, the city provided emergency relief work on sewer construction and road grading to destitute married men with families and permanent residence in the city. While Vancouver claimed it could care for its "own permanent citizens," the "floating class" caused great concern. The city called for immediate federal aid especially to care for those who had only recently arrived from other provinces.²⁶

The federal government responded to such entreaties. Conforming to the traditional practice of providing work, Ottawa let contracts worth \$10.5 million for the construction of two ships, a dry dock, and the Ballantyne Pier. As a result of the "extraordinary circumstances" created by the war, the federal government in mid-December responded to pleas from Vancouver and other Canadian cities and announced that it would pay a third of the cost of direct relief provided by municipalities until the end of March. This policy broke many precedents since Ottawa had always argued that unemployment was a problem for local authorities; but Prime Minister Meighen emphasized the unusual circumstances and his government reiterated its belief that normally unemployment should be met with work, not relief.²⁷

Direct relief was a synonym for the dole. The new federal policy and the province's agreement to contribute one-third of the cost made the lot of Vancouver's relief administrators much easier; they had run out of sufficient work to provide jobs for all. Council authorized the City Relief Office to relieve "all cases of absolute destitution and want" by providing groceries, meal and bed tickets for those for whom relief work was unavailable. Yet, recipients were expected to prove their worthiness. To eliminate possible malingerers, Council on December 31 inaugurated a work test requiring two days work per week in return for \$4.60 worth of grocery tickets for married men and meal and bed tickets for single men. When the City Relief Officer ascertained that many of those seeking relief were loggers or labourers, he instituted rock breaking as a work test. Any man claiming to be unfit to do such work was subjected to a rigid medical examination. Both work tests eliminated about a quarter of the applicants. Despite these stiff restrictions, 5,054 individuals applied for relief in Vancouver during the first five months of 1921. To provide for them, the city spent \$294,818 plus

an administrative cost of \$11,031 in addition to its regular expenditures on public works.²⁸

The number and cost would have been even greater had it not been for the tendency of families with limited means to attempt to extend their resources by moving to the neighbouring municipality of South Vancouver where housing was cheaper. South Vancouver was already under the control of a provincial commissioner because of its inability to meet the financial obligations it had taken on in the boom years before the War. Under the direction of the commissioner, South Vancouver carefully husbanded a \$30,000 loan from the provincial government and, by investigating all applicants, kept families from starvation during the winter of 1920-21. By spring, however, it had run out of funds and the number on its unemployed list steadily rose until it reached 700 in July. At that time the municipality stopped all relief except for direct aid in the form of food and fuel to about 85 families who lacked an able-bodied breadwinner. During the next winter, South Vancouver shared in the relief payments provided by the provincial and federal governments and was one of the few municipalities in British Columbia to take advantage of the federal government's offer to pay up to half the "cost over normal" of having public works done during the winter months rather than the summer. Even before the seasonal programme ended in the spring the municipality was able to provide only eight days of work in April for fathers of families and lacked the cash to pay them. Many families had not the bare necessities of life; the medical health officer reported that over half the children in South Vancouver schools suffered from malnutrition.²⁹ Although the economy generally improved, the unemployment problem in South Vancouver did not disappear. To relieve actual want, the provincial government in the winter of 1922-23 hired the unemployed of South Vancouver at less than union rates to clear the site of the new provincial university at Point Grey.

South Vancouver's situation was unique because of the duration of the unemployment crisis and the high percentage of family men seeking relief. In the city itself, single men were the most conspicuous of those requesting assistance. During the first five months of 1921, about eighty per cent of the applicants for relief were single men; in Winnipeg only half the applicants were single. The typical applicant in Vancouver was single, Canadian or British-born and in his 20s or 30s. Of the "foreign element," Scandinavians were the most numerous. No Chinese or Japanese and only one member of the small Hindu community applied for relief. They probably suspected their applications would not be favourably received; in any event, the Chinese and Japanese communities had well-developed benevolent institutions and took pride in not being charges on the state. By occupation, loggers and

labourers were the largest single groups represented on the relief rolls. The loggers, of course, did not normally reside in Vancouver but Relief Officer Ireland explained, "they spend most of their earnings in the City and make their headquarters here as they move from one camp or one job to another, and Vancouver therefore must be accepted as their place of employment."³⁰

Unemployment relief was designed to meet a seasonal problem only. On March 15, 1921, the city stopped registering single men and cut them off relief payments a month later unless they were physically unfit. Through their Members of Parliament and through direct requests to the federal Department of Labour, various veterans' associations asked Ottawa to bear the entire cost of relief work. Since Labour Department representatives in Vancouver reported improving employment prospects, the Minister of Labour made no concessions.

The discontent of the unemployed seemed great. When the city stopped issuing rooming-house tickets as a special supplement for 180 returned men engaged on work projects, some 600 men marched on City Hall to protest. Many city residents, recalling demonstrations of other years when relief payments were stopped, prepared to maintain law and order. Under the leadership of Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Bell-Irving, a member of a family prominent in the salmon-canning industry, some ex-officers and men of all services organized themselves to assist the authorities. Local military officials kept sufficient personnel on hand to operate a machine gun on May Day. Fears that a May Day demonstration might degenerate into a riot proved groundless. The two to three thousand paraders had a police permit and marched in an orderly fashion, though some kept time by whistling the "Red Flag." Unemployment continued high; a provincial government survey in July 1921 estimated that 5,600 in Vancouver were out of work. Yet, by fall, the RCMP reported that "revolutionaries" had given up trying to import weapons and ammunition.³¹

Neither the federal nor the provincial government suffered from a lack of suggestions about coping with the unemployment problem to prevent unrest during the coming winter. The Ministerial Association warned that serious danger threatened unless something was "done at once to relieve distress and discontent." Although a provincially-sponsored conference of municipal officials and large employers drew slight employer interest, the Economic Council of Vancouver, a body composed of trade unionists, prominent businessmen, and representatives of veterans' organizations, proposed a joint committee with representatives of the three levels of government to work out a comprehensive plan to deal with winter unemployment. The General Officer Commanding Military District No. 11, that is, British Columbia, proposed to have the RCMP lay charges against a few dozen agitators

in order to keep them out of the way during the winter. Most solutions were less drastic and emphasized the need to provide useful work such as land clearing or road building. There was even a suggestion that the city establish a farm to provide work for the unemployed and cheap food for residents. Commentators agreed that real work, unlike the dole, would reduce the possibility of men becoming pauperized and, more important, would discourage the unemployed from coming to Vancouver.³²

Little attention seems to have been paid to these suggestions, and the dole continued as the basic form of relief during the winter of 1921-22. In October 1921, shortly before the federal election, the Meighen government announced that it would subsidize one-third the cost of unemployment relief again because of the continuing extraordinary circumstances. The unemployed were still migrating towards Vancouver. A Liberal candidate in Vancouver reported that he had found few unemployed in the Kootenay because "they have all gone to Vancouver." When the mayor of Edmonton complained that unemployed Vancouver men were coming to his city, the provincial deputy minister of labour told him that British Columbia was receiving "a dozen non-resident job-hunters against every one going to Alberta."³³

To cope with the single unemployed the city in early December established a camp at the Hastings Park fair grounds where the unemployed, living under military discipline, worked on constructing a nine-hole golf course and cutting firewood in return for a bed and three meals a day. To gain admission, the men had to explain their background, undergo a medical examination, have a certificate from the government employment office stating that they had tried to get work, and (because installation of the camp's fumigation equipment had been delayed) be free of vermin. By the end of December the camp had 621 residents and a number of applications pending.³⁴

More fortunate citizens showed an interest in the camp. They collected clothing and recreation equipment while C. E. Tisdall, an alderman who became mayor in January 1922, made weekly visits. Although Tisdall and other members of Council reported that the men seemed contented, the camp provided many grievances for dissidents and agitators. Indeed, within two weeks of the camp's opening, a labour alderman accused the camp's self-appointed unemployment committee, composed largely of members of the Council of Workers and Canadian National Union of Ex-Servicemen (CNUX), of trying to make the operation of the camp impossible. The men were required to work only a few days a week, but they expressed dissatisfaction with the camp's location. They complained, that if they walked to the employment office they were too late to get any jobs that might have been posted; and if they waited, they would miss at least one meal.

Moreover, they said employers seemed prejudiced against men who admitted their destitution by giving the camp as their home address. The camp's military discipline governed hours of rising and retiring and the camp commandant refused to allow residents to hold mass meetings in their living quarters. Some 223 inhabitants of Hastings Park Camp marched into the city where they held an indignation meeting. They were, however, an orderly group. City police stood by but the men caused no disturbance. In the week following this march, the men held several more protest demonstrations. They displayed the Red Flag and the Union Jack and they marched in military fashion along the curbside in order not to impede traffic. On Sunday, January 29, 1922, they held an unauthorized meeting at the Cambie Street grounds. As soon as the Police Chief told them they were an unlawful assembly, they followed his orders to disperse and adjourned to a nearby ex-Serviceman's Hall. City police, however, had prepared for all eventualities. They had asked the Attorney-General to have the RCMP on standby in case an additional display of force was necessary and had 150 of their own uniformed men on hand for the Sunday meeting. City officials succeeded in avoiding a confrontation. They forbade begging on the streets but reversed their original stand that any man leaving the camp would be denied re-admission. Within the week, most of the men who had been existing on whatever they could secure from collections at meetings of labour organizations returned to camp.³⁵

The demonstration reminded the public that unemployment was still a serious problem. Many city clergymen gave special sermons on the unemployment problem on Sunday, February 26 and contributed to the cost of a newspaper advertisement advising the public that "to provide wholesale employment for all is the most important problem that confronts our modern civilization." Between 4,500 and 5,000 people gathered at a public meeting where they passed a resolution asking the federal government to attack unemployment as a national problem and to pay trade union rates for relief work. Municipal officials were primarily concerned with the 1,500 unemployed married men in Vancouver and South Vancouver. They urged the senior governments to continue assistance past the end of April when it was scheduled to end.³⁶

Other British Columbia cities still had an unemployment problem, but only Vancouver wanted to continue the system whereby each of the three levels of government contributed a third of the cost of unemployment relief. Neither the provincial nor the federal government was willing to continue its aid. The federal government reminded Vancouver that unemployment was fundamentally a provincial and municipal responsibility, that federal aid for unemployment was only

a supplementary programme because of unusual circumstances. Although spokesmen for the unemployed claimed that people were starving, the arrival of spring and several major public works projects such as the Hastings-Barnet Highway and the Ballantyne Pier caused a "sensational drop" in the number of unemployed. Even Alderman Scrivens who represented the city at a federal unemployment conference admitted that the coming winter was likely to be better, and that the single men would be able "to take care of themselves." By the end of 1922, the provincial Department of Labour reported the cloud of depression was lifting. There was also a suspicion that the end of the dole had encouraged men to get off the unemployment relief rolls and to seek employment.³⁷

There was general agreement that the dole system was a failure. While it saved people from starvation, it also led to expectations among the unemployed that it would be a regular winter feature and thus attracted the unemployed and "questionable characters" to the coast. When representatives of Lower Mainland and southern Vancouver Island municipalities met in August 1922 they unanimously opposed the dole. They agreed that unemployment relief work should be reserved for married men and disabled veterans, and they called for an advertising programme in the Prairie provinces to discourage men from coming to the coast for the winter. A Dominion-Provincial conference on Unemployment held in Ottawa in September also condemned the dole and agreed that "all physically fit single men shall be expected to provide for themselves." There was no sympathy for men who quit jobs on the Prairies and came to the coast to enjoy the mild climate while they lived on relief work.³⁸

Except in South Vancouver, there was a brief respite from the unemployment problem in 1923. In 1924, however, new immigrants from Britain and Europe, as well as Canadians returning from California where conditions were "exceedingly bad," increased the number of unemployed at the coast, and that spring, instead of hinterland industries taking on new workers, the lumber and mining industries laid off men. At an Unemployment Conference held in Ottawa early in September Mayor W. R. Owen clearly declared that Vancouver

was not in a position to make expenditures of any kind to take care of the unemployed. Insofar as our own citizens are concerned we have, and are at the present time, able to look after their needs, but the geographical position and climate enjoyed here are such as draw many transients from the Prairies and British Columbia interior points for the Winter and the city cannot fairly be called upon to undertake their *maintenance*.

He specifically asked the federal government to provide work on the Trans-Canada Highway and assistance to the Greater Vancouver Sewerage Board in providing relief work. Despite its reluctance to

accept the burden of unemployment relief, the city found work for most married men and, in a humanitarian gesture, provided beds and means for many single men during the Christmas holiday season. Even this limited gesture of a temporary dole drew new men to the city. When the city announced the imminent end of the dole, the single unemployed became restive. The city extended payments for a week while the provincial government set up land-clearing projects just outside the city for single men and announced highway and sewer construction plans for married men. The city also set up a road-building and rock-breaking project at \$1 per day for single men and full pay for half-time work for married men. Many of the unemployed were not satisfied. Not only was there a time-lag between the cessation of the dole and the full implementation of work projects, but some organizers attempted to persuade the men to refuse to work for less than union wages. Although the unemployed met several times, no serious agitation developed. A short winter allowed an early re-opening of the logging camps, and the placing of relief workers at camps beyond easy walking distance of city centre reduced the number of idle unemployed. From the summer of 1925 through to the winter of 1928, the nation was generally prosperous and unemployment was not a serious problem in Vancouver.³⁹

Nevertheless, to discourage the unemployed from coming to Vancouver the provincial Department of Labour instructed Provincial Police in the interior to remove transients from westbound trains and prosecute them for vagrancy. The courts in the interior towns did not want the cost of keeping vagrants in local jails; hence, they often issued suspended sentences on condition that the men leave town. Beginning in 1925, the city of Vancouver sent two men to the Prairies each fall with instructions to post stickers warning that Vancouver had "no acceptable employment for drifters from the outside" in "every available public space in all the cities and small towns" along the main railway lines. City relief officials believed this advertising discouraged the unemployed from coming to Vancouver in winter, but it did not completely stop the flow of men who competed with permanent city residents for scarce jobs. During the winter of 1928-29, reports of large construction projects in Vancouver and vicinity—including the Canadian National Railways' Hotel Vancouver, a B.C. Electric power dam at Bridge River, and new buildings at the Provincial Mental Hospital in Coquitlam—drew an increased number of job-seekers to the coast. The problem was not significantly worse than it had been in recent years but the city did have to provide some relief work in the spring at \$2 per day for married men and \$1 per day for single men at a time when the standard wage was \$4.50 per day. The principle of requiring men to do productive work in exchange for relief payments had been firmly re-established.⁴⁰

In the fall of 1929, however, the unemployed again drifted towards Vancouver, which seemed to be bearing the brunt of unemployment in the province. Early in December a provincial department of labour official touring the province found that only in Vancouver did unemployment exist in "any exaggerated form." He estimated that eighty per cent of the unemployed were foreigners who had come in from the Prairies during the previous two months and who planned to make Vancouver their ultimate destination.⁴¹

The city had already decided to provide relief work if the unemployment situation required it. Despite protests from organized labour, which was represented on Council by Alderman Angus MacInnis, the city decided to continue its practice of paying less than union wages for relief work. By November city relief officials were asking for more funds even though applicants had to prove twelve months' residence in the city to qualify.⁴² Most of the unemployed in the city did not qualify.

The Communists were quick to exploit the situation. By December 2, they had organized the Vancouver Unemployed Workers' Organization and had arranged for demonstrations. On December 5, between four and six hundred unemployed men marched in an orderly manner through downtown streets, from the Powell Street grounds to Carrall and Cordova where they held a brief meeting. From a spectator point of view, "the display was a dead loss. Not a voice stirred, not a banner fluttered." The calm was mute testimony to the discipline exerted by Communist leaders; the absence of flags was a subtle protest of Police Chief Bingham's order to display the Union Jack as well as the Red Flag. Parades and demonstrations became daily events, and the police superintendent warned City Council that if the men paid attention to the agitators from the Prairies and eastern Canada there would soon be men breaking into stores.⁴³

The Vancouver Unemployed Workers' Organization claimed to have 1,000 members among the approximately twelve to fourteen thousand unemployed in the city. It demanded immediate relief—in cash, not kind—for all unemployed regardless of colour, nationality, or length of residence; it also demanded work at union rates. At a meeting between delegates of the Organization, three aldermen, and Relief Officer Ireland, the unsympathetic aldermen said the city could not afford relief for all. Alderman W. C. Atherton suggested the protesters get jobs decorating store windows for Christmas, to which Comrade McEwen facetiously replied that at Easter they could paint eggs red, white and blue. When another alderman asked why they had not approached the senior governments, their spokesman replied, "simply because the problem is centred in Vancouver." On the last point all could agree. Eleven days later, the city forwarded a resolution

to the senior governments reminding them that "a great number of the unemployed in Vancouver are from all over the Dominion of Canada" and informing them that assistance was urgently required to relieve an acute unemployment problem.⁴⁴ The city fathers were seeking a form of aid that had been tried earlier; it was to be even less successful in resolving the unemployment crisis of the 1930s.

While the unemployment crises must have seemed interminable to their victims, they were punctuated by some seasonal variations and they did eventually end. In the 1930s, of course, unemployment lasted the entire decade and variations were slight. In retrospect, the problem of the previous two decades seemed minor and the treatment of the unemployed, humane. But memories of organized agitation and the sense that Vancouver was unduly burdened as a mecca for the unemployed were not readily forgotten and undoubtedly contributed to the apprehension felt in the city as the unemployed congregated there in unprecedented numbers. Being a "mecca for the unemployed" was not a rewarding experience. Vancouver had easily learned to enjoy being a metropolis; it did not welcome the problems that the status entailed.

NOTES

- ¹ J. H. McVety to J. D. McNiven, 6 December 1929, Provincial Archives of British Columbia (hereafter PABC), Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 286, file 106.
- ² Diane L. Matters, "Public Welfare Vancouver Style, 1910-1920," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 14 (Spring 1979), p. 4; Diane L. Matters, "The Development of Public Welfare Institutions in Vancouver, 1910-1920," B. A. Essay (University of Victoria, 1973), Chapter II.
- ³ *Westward Ho! Magazine*, December 1907, p. 1; *Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser*, 10 and 13 December 1907; *Vancouver Daily Province*, 6 and 14 December 1907, and 15 November 1907.
- ⁴ Vancouver City Council Minute Book, 23 December 1907, City of Vancouver Archives (hereafter CVA), Report of Finance Committee Meeting, 10 December 1907. By way of comparison, in 1907, the B.C. Electric Railway paid its conductors and motormen wages ranging from 20¢ to 31½¢ per hour, depending on their years of experience.
- ⁵ *Province*, 17 December 1907 and 23 January 1908; *News-Advertiser*, 20 December 1907; R. G. Chamberlain to Col. H. P. Sherwood, 10 January 1907 [sic, 1908], Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC), Wilfrid Laurier Papers, #135713-5.
- ⁶ R. H. Sperling to George Kidd, 7 March 1908, University of British Columbia Library, British Columbia Electric Railway Company Records, Box 652.
- ⁷ *Province*, 29 and 30 December 1911, 3, 4 and 8 January 1912, and 24 February 1912; *Kamloops Standard*, 19 January 1912.
- ⁸ *News-Advertiser*, 19 and 21 January 1912, 7 February 1912.
- ⁹ Chief Constable Samson to J. F. McLeod, Deputy Attorney-General, 29 March 1912, PABC, Attorney-General's Papers (hereafter AGP), File 1449-4-12; *Province*, 30 January 1912.
- ¹⁰ *News-Advertiser*, 13 February 1912; *Province*, 19 February 1912.
- ¹¹ *News-Advertiser*, 13 January 1913, 7 August, 1912, 22 November 1913; *Labour Gazette*, June 1913, p. 1371, December 1913, pp. 677-8, February 1914, p. 944.
- ¹² *News-Advertiser*, 20 November 1914; Rev. A. E. Cooke to Richard McBride, 28 September 1914 and Mayor T. S. Baxter to McBride, 19 December 1914, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 166; M. J. Reid to W. D. Scott quoting Dr. F. T. Underhill to M. J. Reid, 22 December 1914, PABC, AGP, File 8560-14-14.
- ¹³ *Province*, 30 April 1915; *News-Advertiser*, 10 April 1915; W. J. Bowser to R. L. Maitland, 13 January 1915, PABC, AGP, File 8560-14-14.
- ¹⁴ Baxter to Bowser, 21 October and 31 August 1914 and Underhill to Reid, 22 December 1914, PABC, AGP, File 8560-14-14.
- ¹⁵ *Vancouver Daily World*, 30 March and 7 April 1915; *Vancouver Sun*, 14 July 1915.
- ¹⁶ *Province*, 17 February and 6 and 29 March 1915.

- ¹⁷ *World*, 24 March, 7 and 17 April 1915; L. D. Taylor to W. J. Bowser, 30 March 1915 and Bowser to Taylor, 1 April 1915, PABC, AGP, File 8560 14 14.
- ¹⁸ *World*, 6 April 1915.
- ¹⁹ *Province*, 7 April 1915; *News-Advertiser*, 13 April 1915; Bowser to Prime Minister R. L. Borden, 8 April 1915, PABC, AGP, File 8560 14 14.
- ²⁰ Bowser to Taylor, 20 April 1915, PABC, AGP 8560 14 14.
- ²¹ *World*, 9 April 1915.
- ²² *Sun*, 11 and 14 May, 19 and 29 June 1915; *News-Advertiser*, 11 July 1915. The cost of providing relief was high. During the first six months of 1915, the city spent \$108,860 on relief in addition to the \$15,000 provincial emergency grant. *Labour Gazette*, August 1915, pp. 169-70.
- ²³ *Labour Gazette*, December 1915, p. 193.
- ²⁴ Mayor R. H. Gale to Premier John Oliver, 25 March 1919, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 198, File 1106.
- ²⁵ Adjutant-General to General Officer Commanding, 24-29 May 1919, Department of National Defence, Directorate of History (hereafter D.Hist.) 372.09 (13806).
- ²⁶ J. J. Coughlan and Sons Ltd. to A. Johnston, Deputy Minister of Marine, 9 October 1920, Copy in PAC, H. H. Stevens Papers, vol. 1. R. H. Gale to Arthur Meighen, 19 November 1920, PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, #29688 and #29693.
- ²⁷ Prime Minister Arthur Meighen to Oliver, 23 November 1920, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 210, file 106; Enclosure with G. D. Robertson to Oliver, 24 December 1920, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 218, file 106; James Struther, "Prelude to Depression: The Federal Government and Unemployment, 1918-29," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. LVIII (September 1977), pp. 277-93.
- ²⁸ "Report on Special Unemployment Relief, Vancouver, B.C., 1st January to May 31st, 1921," copy in VCA, Mayor's Correspondence, Vol. 2.
- ²⁹ F. J. Gillespie to John Hart, 1 May 1921, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 216, file 82; B. Priestley to John Oliver, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 226, file 106. For the background of South Vancouver, which was amalgamated with the city in 1929, see Patricia E. Roy, *Vancouver: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: Lorimer, 1980).
- ³⁰ "Report on Special Unemployment Relief."
- ³¹ Lt.-Col. Robert Leckie to Officer Commanding, Canadian Air Force, 25 April 1921, D.Hist., S-1009; Air Board, Jericho Beach to Secretary, Air Board, Ottawa, 3 May 1921, PAC, Department of National Defence Records, Vol. 2576; A. B. Perry to Deputy Minister, Militia and Defence, 10 September 1921, PAC, Department of National Defence Records, Vol. 2571; G. D. Robertson to George Buskard, 29 March 1921, PAC, Meighen Papers, #299775; Transcript, Labour Conference, Vancouver, B.C., 10 August 1921, p. 6, PAC, Department of Labour Records, vol. 209.
- ³² Rev. W. S. Ryder to Attorney-General, 5 May 1921, PABC, AGP, Microfilm Reel 148, File V 279 11; Extract from Memo by Brig.-Gen. Ross, 18 June 1921, PAC, Department of National Defence Records, Vol. 2576; P. G. Drost, Manager, Central City Mission to Chairman, Relief Committee, Vancouver, May 1921, copy in PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 223, file 6; Gordon Ross to Arthur Meighen, 14 September 1921, PAC, Meighen Papers, #29791 2.
- ³³ Struthers, "Prelude to Depression," p. 284; Victor W. Odum's Campaign Address, 11 November 1921, copy in CVA, Leon J. Ladner Papers, Vol. 13; J. D. McNiven to Mayor D. M. Duggan, 24 November 1921, copy in PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 218, file 106.
- ³⁴ *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 29 December 1921; *Province*, 5 December 1921.
- ³⁵ *Sun*, 24, 26 and 30 January 1922; *Province*, 19 December 1921; Chairman, Unemployment Committee, Vancouver to A. M. Manson, 28 January 1922, PABC, AGP, Microfilm Roll 148, File V 279 5-1922.
- ³⁶ *Sun*, 25 February 1922; "Resolution Passed by Mass Meeting of 5,000 Citizens at Tabernacle, Main Street, Vancouver, February 26, 1922 and at Joint Conference of Trades Unions, Returned Men's Organizations and Other Public Bodies Held February 6, 1922," Copy in PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 226, File 106.
- ³⁷ *Victoria Daily Times*, 26 April and 9 May 1922; James Murdock, Minister of Labour to John Oliver, 4 May 1922, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 226, File 106; British Columbia, Department of Labour, *Annual Report*, 1922, p. 55, Verbatim Report of Proceedings of Unemployment Conference held at Ottawa, September 5-6-7, 1922, PAC, Department of Labour Records, vol. 113.
- ³⁸ J. H. McVety to J. D. McNiven, 11 March 1929, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 286, File 106; *Province*, 22 and 29 August 1929.
- ³⁹ G. D. Ireland to Ald. J. A. Garbutt, 17 March 1924, CVA, City Clerk's Correspondence, Vol. 101; J. D. McNiven to Minister of Labour, 25 June 1924, and William McQueen to Premier, 30 December 1924, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 241, File 106; Mayor W. R. Owens to Industries and Employment Committee of City of Vancouver, 13 September

1924 and A. E. Craddock, Secretary, Associated Property Owners of Vancouver to City Clerk, 14 August 1924 in CVA, City Clerk's Correspondence, Vol. 103.

- ⁴⁰ A. M. Manson to A. E. Craddock, 10 September 1925, PABC, AGP, 1925-37, File L-125-1; G. D. Ireland to Ald. J. A. Garbutt, 4 November 1925, CVA, City Clerk's Correspondence, Vol. 107; J. H. McVety to J. D. McNiven, 11 March 1929, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 286, File 106.

- ⁴¹ J. D. McNiven to Robert Morrison, 7 December 1929, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 286, File 106.

- ⁴² W. Page, Secretary, Building Trades Council to Mayor and Council, 28 November 1929, CVA, City Clerk's Correspondence, Vol. 124; *Province*, 15 November 1929.

- ⁴³ *Province*, 5, 6, and 18 December 1929.

- ⁴⁴ *Province*, 6 December 1929; Ald. W. C. Atherton to Relief and Employment Committee, 5 December 1929, CVA, City Clerk's Correspondence, Vol. 136; W. McQueen to Premier S. F. Tolmie, 16 December 1929, PABC, Premier's Official Correspondence, Box 286, File 106.

STATISTICAL APPENDIX

TABLE A 1

POPULATION GROWTH IN INCORPORATED VILLAGES

URBAN CENTRE	DATE OF INCORPORATION			1871	1881	1886	1891	1901	1906	1911
	Village	Town	City							
Altona	1945	1956								
Beausjour	1908	1912								847
Bonsevan	1898	1906						898	979	918
Brandon			1882			2,348	3,778	5,620	10,408	13,839
Brooklands ^(b)	1921	1961								
Carberry	1889	1905						1,023	1,111	878
Carman	1899	1905						1,439	1,530	1,271
Dauphin	1898	1901						1,135	1,670	2,815
East Kildonan ^(c)			1957					563	569	1,488
Fin Flon		1946	1970							
Gimli	1908	1946								496
Killarney	1903	1907						585	1,117	1,010
Melita	1902	1906							784	690
Minnedosa		1883				549		1,052	1,299	1,483
Morden		1903					1,176	1,522	1,437	1,130
Morris		1883						465	513	598
Neepawa		1883				255	774	1,418	1,895	1,864
Portage la Prairie		1880	1907			2,028	3,363	3,901	5,106	5,892
Rivers		1913								
Roblin	1913	1962								
Russell	1907	1913								562
St. Anne	1963									
St. Boniface		1883	1908	817	1,283	1,449	1,553	2,019	5,119	7,483
St. James ^(d)			1956					257	1,055	5,335
St. James-Assiniboia ^(d)			1970							
St. Vital ^(e)			1962					585	987	1,540
Selkirk		1882				705	950	2,188	2,701	2,977
Souris		1903						839	1,413	1,854
Strehbach		1946								
Stonewall	1906	1908						589	1,074	1,005
Swan River		1908								574
The Pas		1912								
Thompson ^(f)		1967	1970							
Transcona		1912	1961							
Tuxedo		1913								
Virden	1890	1904					606	901	1,471	1,550
West Kildonan ^(f)			1961					668	675	1,767
Winkler	1906	1954						391	530	458
Winnipeg ^(b)			1873	241	7,985	20,238	25,639	42,340	90,153	136,035

Notes: (a) Includes only those centres with a population exceeding 1,000 in 1971.

(b) Annexed to St. James-Assiniboia city in 1967.

(c) The rural municipality of East Kildonan incorporated as a city in 1957.

(d) The rural municipality of St. James incorporated as a city in 1956. It amalgamated with Assiniboia municipality as the city of St. James-Assiniboia in 1970.

(e) The rural municipality of St. Vital incorporated as a city in 1962.

(f) Thompson is an example of an instant town. It was established by the International Nickel Company.

TOWNS, AND CITIES IN MANITOBA, 1871-1971^(a)

1916	1921	1926	1931	1936	1941	1946	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
879	994	996	1,139	1,154	1,161	1,065	1,438	1,698	2,026	2,129	2,122
948	825	788	859	819	817	836	1,015	1,523	1,770	2,214	2,236
15,215	15,397	16,443	17,082	16,461	17,383	17,551	20,598	24,796	28,166	29,981	31,150
931	794	833	807	778	931	2,240	2,728	3,941	2,915	4,369	4,181
1,426	1,591	1,385	1,418	1,364	1,455	1,555	1,867	1,884	1,930	1,922	2,030
3,200	3,885	3,580	3,971	4,147	4,662	4,637	6,007	6,190	7,374	8,655	8,891
4,828	6,379	7,396	9,047	8,573	8,350	9,071	13,144	18,718	27,305	28,796	30,152
524	617	634	713	765	853	1,045	1,324	1,660	1,841	2,262	2,041
989	871	901	1,003	978	1,051	1,091	1,262	1,434	1,729	1,836	2,074
834	676	649	719	560	591	659	781	926	1,038	1,101	1,132
1,833	1,505	1,681	1,680	1,686	1,636	1,837	2,085	2,306	2,211	2,305	2,621
1,261	1,268	1,354	1,416	1,462	1,427	1,690	1,862	2,237	2,793	3,097	3,266
665	796	777	768	830	953	920	1,193	1,260	1,370	1,339	1,399
1,854	1,887	1,833	1,910	2,068	2,292	2,468	2,895	3,109	3,197	3,229	3,215
5,879	6,766	6,513	6,597	6,538	7,187	7,620	8,511	10,525	12,388	13,012	12,950
712	857	829	724	663	802	657	1,209	1,422	1,574	1,685	1,175
389	617	678	680	704	765	799	1,055	1,173	1,368	1,617	1,753
820	696	814	827	823	783	885	1,100	1,227	1,263	1,511	1,526
11,021	12,821	14,187	16,305	16,275	18,157	21,613	26,342	28,851	37,600	43,214	46,714
9,545	11,745	12,514	13,903	13,329	13,892	14,903	19,561	26,502	33,977	35,685	71,431
1,844	3,771	7,785	10,402	11,377	11,993	14,674	18,637	23,672	27,269	29,528	32,963
3,399	3,726	4,201	4,486	4,566	4,915	5,408	6,218	7,413	8,576	9,157	9,331
1,845	1,710	1,612	1,661	1,480	1,346	1,517	1,584	1,759	1,841	1,829	1,674
1,152	1,112	1,043	1,031	1,009	1,020	1,071	1,040	1,110	1,420	1,577	1,583
562	903	900	968	1,016	1,129	1,175	2,290	2,644	3,163	3,470	3,522
1,270	1,858	1,925	4,030	3,405	3,181	3,102	3,376	3,971	4,671	5,031	6,062
3,356	4,185	5,218	5,747	5,578	5,495	6,132	6,752	8,312	14,248	19,761	22,490
192	1,062	717	1,173	1,017	735	677	1,627	1,163	1,627	2,480	3,258
1,618	1,361	1,380	1,590	1,481	1,619	1,597	1,746	3,225	2,708	2,933	2,823
3,676	4,641	5,657	6,132	6,042	6,110	6,579	10,754	15,251	20,077	22,240	23,959
547	812	971	1,005	1,036	957	1,164	1,331	1,634	2,529	2,570	2,983
163,000	179,087	191,998	218,785	215,814	221,960	229,045	255,093	235,610	265,429	257,005	246,246

(g) The rural municipality of West Kildonan incorporated as a city in 1961.

(h) On January 1, 1972, the City of Winnipeg (Unicity) was established from the old City of Winnipeg, and the eleven other municipal governments which previously made up Greater Winnipeg. The seven incorporated cities of the previous metropolitan area were East Kildonan, West Kildonan, St. Vital, Transcona, St. Boniface, St. James-Assiniboia, and Winnipeg. The remaining municipalities were four rural municipalities and one town.

SOURCES *Censuses of Canada, 1871-1971, Census of Population and Agriculture of the Northwest Provinces, 1906, and Censuses of the Prairie Provinces, 1916, 1946.*

TABLE A II

POPULATION GROWTH IN INCORPORATED VILLAGES.

URBAN CENTRE	DATE OF INCORPORATION			1881-82	1891	1901	1906	1911	1916
	Village	Town	City						
Assiniboia	1912	1913	—	—	—	—	—	—	719
Battleford	1899	1904	—	—	—	609	933	1,335	1,436
Biggar	1909	1911	—	—	—	—	—	315	830
Canora	1905	1910	—	—	—	—	169	435	835
Carlyle	1902	1905	—	—	—	—	374	358	412
Carnduff	1899	1905	—	—	—	190	491	469	555
Creighton	1952	1957	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Davidson	1904	1906	—	—	—	—	520	389	513
Esterhazy	1903	1957	—	—	—	—	231	258	361
Estevan	1899	1906	1957	—	—	141	877	1,981	2,140
Eston	1916	1928	—	—	—	—	—	—	117
Foam Lake	1908	1924	—	—	—	—	—	185	255
Fort Qu'Appelle	1898	1951	—	—	—	241	170	285	295
Gravelbourg	1912	1916	—	—	—	—	—	—	463
Grenfell	1894	1911	—	—	—	452	677	709	873
Gull Lake	1909	1911	—	—	—	—	—	606	712
Herbert	1907	1912	—	—	—	—	—	559	950
Hudson Bay ^(b)	1907	1946	—	—	—	—	—	215	174
Humboldt	1905	1907	—	—	—	—	279	859	1,435
Indian Head	—	1902	—	—	—	768	1,545	1,285	1,334
Kamsack	1905	1911	—	—	—	—	204	473	1,202
Kelvington	1921	1944	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kerrobert	1910	1911	—	—	—	—	—	320	571
Kindersley	1910	1910	—	—	—	—	—	456	770
Langenburg	1903	1959	—	—	—	—	156	220	198
Lanigan	1907	1908	—	—	—	—	—	392	372
Leader	1913	1917	—	—	—	—	—	—	490
Lloydminster	1903	1907	1958	—	—	—	389	441	494
Maple Creek	1896	1903	—	—	—	382	687	936	1,140
Meadow Lake	1931	1936	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Melfort	1903	1907	—	—	—	—	351	599	971
Melville	1908	1909	1960	—	—	—	—	1,816	2,100
Moose Jaw	—	1884	1903	c. 100	1,200	1,558	6,249	13,823	16,934
Moosomin	—	1887	—	—	—	868	1,152	1,143	1,329
Nipawin	1925	1939	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
North Battleford	1906	1906	1913	—	—	—	824	2,105	3,154
Outlook	1908	1909	—	—	—	—	—	685	613
Oxbow	1899	1904	—	—	—	230	527	630	678
Preeceville	1912	1946	—	—	—	—	—	—	148
Prince Albert	—	1885	1904	c. 500	1,009	1,785	3,005	6,254	6,436
Radville	1911	1913	—	—	—	—	—	233	621
Regina	—	1883	1903	c. 800	1,681	2,249	6,169	30,213	26,167
Rosetown	1909	1911	—	—	—	—	—	317	731
Rosthern	1898	1903	—	—	—	413	918	1,172	1,200
Saskatoon	1901	1903	1906	—	—	113	3,001	12,004	21,048
Shaunavon	1913	1914	—	—	—	—	—	—	897
Shellbrook	1909	1948	—	—	—	—	—	198	307
Sutherland ^(c)	1909	1912	—	—	—	—	—	421	940
Swift Current	1904	1907	1913	—	—	121	554	1,852	3,181
Tisdale	1905	1920	—	—	—	—	61	250	458
Unity	1909	1914	—	—	—	—	—	149	457
Wadena	1906	1912	—	—	—	—	—	255	449
Wakaw	1911	1953	—	—	—	—	—	—	250
Watrous	1908	1909	—	—	—	—	—	781	843
Weyburn	1900	1903	1913	—	—	113	966	2,210	3,050
Whitewood	—	1892	—	—	—	359	501	447	446
Wilkie	1908	1910	—	—	—	—	—	537	815
Wynyard	1908	1911	—	—	—	—	—	515	682
Yorkton	1894	1900	1928	—	—	700	1,363	2,309	3,144

Notes: (a) Includes only those centres with a population exceeding 1,000 in 1971.

(b) Called Hudson Bay Junction prior to 1947.

TOWNS, AND CITIES IN SASKATCHEWAN, 1881-1971^(a)

1921	1926	1931	1936	1941	1946	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
1,006	1,245	1,454	1,257	1,349	1,585	1,938	2,027	2,491	2,872	2,675
1,229	1,018	1,096	1,128	1,317	1,336	1,319	1,498	1,627	1,766	1,803
1,535	2,034	2,369	1,953	1,930	1,799	2,214	2,424	2,702	2,755	2,607
1,230	1,121	1,179	1,254	1,200	1,205	1,568	1,873	2,117	2,734	2,603
394	388	480	435	429	529	716	829	982	1,064	1,101
494	573	506	403	384	476	600	823	957	1,194	1,075
							1,659	1,729	1,710	1,857
652	602	560	470	456	478	670	851	928	1,066	1,043
420	393	403	422	431	486	652	748	1,114	3,190	2,896
2,290	2,336	2,936	2,854	2,774	3,120	3,935	5,264	7,728	9,062	9,150
318	369	566	634	726	883	1,301	1,625	1,695	1,548	1,418
451	436	518	539	557	564	788	841	933	1,165	1,331
495	568	545	577	673	683	878	1,130	1,521	1,600	1,606
1,106	1,201	1,137	985	1,130	1,079	1,197	1,434	1,499	1,626	1,428
765	699	857	800	857	856	1,007	1,080	1,256	1,369	1,350
788	908	854	742	836	730	728	1,052	1,038	1,235	1,156
827	997	1,009	900	875	824	951	958	1,008	1,040	1,024
160	198	410	471	547	793	1,115	1,421	1,601	1,957	1,971
1,822	1,751	1,899	1,819	1,767	1,798	2,435	2,916	3,245	3,979	3,881
1,439	1,313	1,438	1,365	1,349	1,354	1,569	1,721	1,802	1,891	1,810
2,002	1,948	2,087	1,810	1,792	1,754	2,327	2,843	2,968	2,982	2,783
	370	455	556	615	698	906	819	885	980	1,053
788	751	868	653	588	711	807	1,037	1,220	1,237	1,180
1,003	987	1,037	1,030	990	1,235	1,755	2,572	2,990	3,534	3,451
307	288	329	324	359	405	596	668	757	1,269	1,236
426	403	384	340	359	336	410	462	516	911	1,430
765	526	627	583	641	716	835	1,085	1,211	1,236	1,105
469	847	1,516	922	1,052	1,135	3,938	5,077	5,667	7,071	8,691
1,002	930	1,154	1,032	1,085	1,280	1,638	1,974	2,291	2,359	2,268
			800	971	1,456	1,955	2,477	2,803	3,375	3,435
1,746	1,605	1,809	1,948	2,005	2,305	2,919	3,322	4,039	4,386	4,725
2,808	3,352	3,891	3,923	4,011	3,824	4,458	4,948	5,191	5,690	5,375
19,285	19,039	21,299	19,805	20,753	23,069	24,355	29,603	33,206	33,417	31,854
1,099	1,121	1,119	1,104	1,096	1,134	1,235	1,390	1,781	2,141	2,407
	479	562	892	1,344	2,211	3,050	3,337	3,836	3,963	4,057
4,108	4,787	5,986	4,719	4,745	5,717	7,473	8,924	11,230	12,262	12,698
704	634	712	598	505	614	676	885	1,340	1,499	1,767
602	615	585	505	465	576	688	783	1,359	1,569	1,380
319	364	350	406	434	540	746	807	924	1,202	1,118
7,558	7,893	9,905	11,049	12,508	14,532	17,149	20,366	24,168	26,269	28,464
883	1,082	1,005	854	813	859	973	1,087	1,067	1,053	1,024
34,432	37,329	53,209	53,354	58,245	60,246	71,319	89,755	112,141	131,127	139,469
865	1,142	1,553	1,520	1,470	1,563	1,865	2,262	2,450	2,658	2,614
1,074	1,273	1,412	1,355	1,149	1,218	1,183	1,268	1,264	1,414	1,431
25,739	31,234	43,291	41,734	43,027	46,028	53,268	72,858	95,526	115,892	126,449
1,146	1,459	1,716	1,636	1,603	1,643	1,625	1,959	2,154	2,318	2,244
402	468	482	470	489	506	649	907	1,042	1,088	1,048
961	1,010	1,148	942	888	1,046	1,329				
3,518	4,175	5,296	5,074	5,594	6,379	7,458	10,612	12,186	14,485	15,415
783	846	1,069	1,152	1,237	1,469	2,141	2,104	2,402	2,914	2,798
611	747	806	705	682	817	1,248	1,607	1,902	2,154	2,294
544	503	582	595	679	762	1,081	1,154	1,311	1,404	1,382
387	494	677	692	702	659	766	898	974	1,032	1,009
1,101	1,172	1,303	1,147	1,138	1,126	1,228	1,340	1,461	1,459	1,541
3,193	4,119	5,002	5,338	6,179	7,003	7,148	7,684	9,101	9,000	8,815
499	513	564	607	689	630	750	789	900	1,069	1,098
778	1,041	1,222	1,220	1,232	1,425	1,580	1,630	1,612	1,603	1,642
849	833	1,042	1,110	1,080	1,084	1,326	1,522	1,686	1,956	1,932
5,151	4,458	5,027	4,931	5,577	5,714	7,074	8,256	9,995	12,645	13,430

(c) Annexed to Saskatoon, January 1, 1956.

SOURCES: See Table A.1.

TABLE A III

POPULATION GROWTH IN INCORPORATED VILLAGES

URBAN CENTRE	DATE OF INCORPORATION			1881	1891	1901	1906	1911	1916
	Village	Town	City						
Airdrie	1909							181	148
Athabasca	1905	1911					407	227	497
Barrhead	1927	1946							
Beaverlodge	1929	1956							
Bellevue	1957								
Beverly	1913	1914							813
Blairmore	1901	1911				231	449	1,137	1,219
Bonnyville	1929	1948							
Bowness ^(b)	1948	1951							
Brooks		1911							290
Calgary		1884	1893	100	3,867	4,398	11,967	43,704	56,514
Camrose	1905	1906	1955				412	1,586	1,692
Canmore	1965	1966							
Cardston	1898	1901				639	1,001	1,207	1,370
Castor	1909	1910						1,659	755
Claresholm	1903	1905					680	809	687
Coaldale	1919	1952							
Cochrane	1903	1971					158	395	284
Cold Lake	1954	1955							
Coleman	1904	1910					915	1,557	1,559
Devon	1950	1950							
Didsbury	1901	1906					477	726	640
Drayton Valley	1956	1957							
Drumheller	1913	1916	1930						312
Edmonton		1892	1904	263	700	2,626	11,167	31,064	53,846
Edson	1911	1911						497	500
Fairview	1929	1949							
Forest Lawn ^(c)	1935	1952							
Fort Macleod ^(d)		1892				796	1,144	1,844	1,811
Fort McMurray ^(e)	1947	1948							
Fort Saskatchewan	1899	1904				306	595	792	993
Fox Creek		1967							
Grand Centre	1957	1958							
Grand Cache		1966							
Grand Prairie	1914	1919	1958						337
Grimshaw	1930	1953							
Hanna	1912	1914							711
High Level		1965							
High Prairie	1945	1950							
High River	1901	1910				153	1,018	1,182	1,182
Hinton		1957							
Innisfail	1899	1903				317	643	602	838
Jasper Place ^(f)	1950	1950							
Lac la Biche	1919	1950							
Lacombe	1896	1902				499	1,015	1,029	1,047
Leduc	1899	1906				112	391	523	584
Lethbridge		1890	1906			2,072	2,936	9,035	9,436
McLennan	1944	1948							
Magrath	1901	1907				424	884	995	938
Manning	1952	1957							
Mayerthorpe	1927	1961							
Medicine Hat	1894	1898	1906			1,570	3,020	5,608	9,272
Montgomery ^(g)		1958							
Morinville	1901	1911					203	385	331
Okotoks	1899	1904				245	508	516	525
Olds	1896	1905				218	554	917	730
Peace River	1914	1919							742
Picture Butte	1943	1960							
Pincher Creek	1898	1906				335	589	1,027	1,026
Ponoka	1900	1904				151	473	642	604
Provost	1910	1952						329	420
Raymond	1902	1903					1,568	1,465	1,205
Redcliff	1910	1912						220	1,294
Red Deer	1894	1901	1913			323	1,418	2,118	2,203
Redwater	1950	1950							
Rimbey	1919	1948							

TOWNS AND CITIES IN ALBERTA, 1881-1971^(a)

1921	1926	1931	1936	1941	1946	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
237	220	234	214	191	198	267	327	524	778	1,089
425	435	573	608	578	747	1,068	1,293	1,487	1,551	1,765
		222	307	399	739	1,243	1,610	2,286	2,592	2,803
		211	203	331	443	514	768	897	1,083	1,157
								1,323	1,174	1,242
1,039	931	1,111	998	981	1,171	2,159	4,602	9,041		
1,552	1,609	1,629	1,682	1,731	1,767	1,933	1,973	1,980	1,779	2,037
		362	433	603	730	1,139	1,495	1,736	2,237	2,587
						2,922	6,217	9,184		
499	511	708	697	888	1,091	1,648	2,320	2,827	3,354	3,986
63,305	65,291	83,761	83,407	88,904	100,044	129,060	181,780	249,641	330,575	403,319
1,892	2,002	2,258	2,263	2,598	2,967	4,131	5,817	6,939	8,362	8,676
									1,445	1,538
1,612	2,034	1,672	1,711	1,864	2,334	2,487	2,607	2,801	2,721	2,685
710	651	634	592	625	647	798	958	1,025	1,090	1,166
963	956	1,156	1,051	1,265	1,306	1,608	2,431	2,143	2,569	2,935
142	164	251	255	290	413	806	2,327	2,592	2,541	2,748
282	293	336	298	405	530	707	707	857	819	1,046
							1,097	1,307	1,289	1,309
1,590	2,044	1,704	2,129	1,870	1,809	1,961	1,566	1,713	1,507	1,534
						842	1,429	1,418	1,283	1,468
842	785	801	846	892	980	1,180	1,227	1,254	1,586	1,821
							2,588	3,854	3,352	3,900
2,499	2,578	2,987	2,912	2,748	2,659	2,601	2,632	2,931	3,574	5,446
58,821	65,163	79,187	85,774	93,817	113,116	159,631	226,002	281,027	376,925	438,152
1,138	1,493	1,547	1,600	1,499	1,571	1,956	2,560	3,198	3,788	3,818
		260	393	432	487	929	1,260	1,506	1,884	2,109
			803	899	646	1,079	3,150	12,263		
1,723	1,715	1,447	1,365	1,912	1,649	1,860	2,103	2,490	2,709	2,715
						926	1,110	1,186	2,614	6,847
982	943	1,001	899	903	921	1,076	2,582	2,972	4,152	5,726
										1,281
								1,493	1,731	2,088
										2,525
1,061	917	1,464	1,478	1,724	2,267	2,664	6,302	8,352	11,417	13,079
		137	129	169	287	564	904	1,095	1,376	1,714
1,364	1,400	1,490	1,405	1,622	1,756	2,027	2,327	2,645	2,633	2,545
						643	1,141	1,743	708	1,614
1,198	1,377	1,459	1,359	1,430	1,674	1,888	2,102	1,756	2,241	2,354
								2,276	2,239	2,676
								3,529	4,307	4,911
941	944	1,024	1,124	1,223	1,272	1,417	1,883	2,270	2,531	2,474
						9,139	15,957	30,530		
75	437	313	410	517	642	905	967	1,314	1,490	1,791
1,133	1,151	1,259	1,414	1,603	1,808	2,277	2,747	3,029	3,035	3,436
756	832	900	926	871	920	1,842	2,008	2,356	2,856	4,000
11,097	10,735	13,489	13,523	14,612	16,522	22,947	29,462	35,454	37,186	41,217
					823	1,074	1,092	1,078	1,104	1,090
1,069	1,202	1,224	1,217	1,207	1,295	1,320	1,382	1,338	1,220	1,215
							726	896	1,179	1,071
		159	209	217	303	472	563	663	916	1,036
9,634	9,536	10,300	9,592	10,571	12,859	16,364	20,826	24,484	25,574	26,518
								5,007		
460	562	570	554	580	735	892	957	935	995	1,475
448	579	760	571	591	694	767	764	1,043	922	1,247
764	1,003	1,056	1,197	1,337	1,521	1,617	1,980	2,433	2,999	3,376
980	582	864	883	873	997	1,672	2,034	2,543	4,087	5,039
					689	865	881	978	1,013	1,008
888	1,003	1,024	999	994	1,148	1,456	1,729	2,961	2,882	3,227
712	842	836	1,045	1,306	1,468	2,574	3,387	3,938	4,421	4,414
465	476	533	490	518	645	676	878	1,022	1,328	1,489
1,394	1,799	1,849	2,094	2,089	2,116	2,279	2,399	2,362	1,950	2,156
1,137	916	1,192	990	1,111	1,289	1,538	2,001	2,221	2,141	2,255
2,328	2,021	2,344	2,394	2,924	4,042	7,575	12,338	19,612	26,171	27,674
						1,306	1,065	1,135	1,041	1,287
319	280	304	313	410	634	757	980	1,266	1,502	1,450

TABLE AIII—continued.

URBAN CENTRE	DATE OF INCORPORATION			1881	1891	1901	1906	1911	1916
	Village	Town	City						
Rocky Mountain House	1913	1939	—	—	—	—	—	—	191
St. Albert	1899	1904	—	—	—	472	543	614	655
St. Paul ^(b)	1912	1937	—	—	—	—	—	—	324
Slave Lake	1961	1965	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Spirit River	1916	1951	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Spruce Grove ^(c)	1907	1971	—	—	—	—	—	16	23
Stettler	—	1906	—	—	—	—	570	1,444	1,168
Stony Plain	1907	1908	—	—	—	—	—	505	293
Strathcona	—	1899	1907	—	—	1,550	2,921	5,579	—
Strathmore	1908	1911	—	—	—	—	—	531	511
Swan Hills	—	1959	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sylvan Lake	1912	1946	—	—	—	—	—	—	115
Taber	1905	1907	—	—	—	—	578	1,400	1,412
Three Hills	1912	1928	—	—	—	—	—	—	224
Valley View	1955	1957	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vauxhall	1950	1961	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vegreville	1906	1906	—	—	—	—	344	1,029	1,156
Vermilion	1906	1906	—	—	—	—	623	625	929
Viking	1909	1952	—	—	—	—	—	153	227
Vulcan	1912	1921	—	—	—	—	—	—	415
Wainwright	—	1910	—	—	—	—	—	788	818
Westlock	1916	1947	—	—	—	—	—	—	97
Wetaskiwin	1899	1902	1906	—	—	550	1,652	2,411	2,048
Whitecourt	1959	1961	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Notes: (a) Includes only those centres with a population exceeding 1,000 in 1971.

(b) Annexed to Calgary in 1964.

(c) Annexed to Calgary in 1961.

(d) The original settlement was known as Fort Macleod. The town was incorporated as Macleod in 1892. In 1952 the original name was restored.

1921	1926	1931	1936	1941	1946	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
375	467	646	652	800	1,017	1,147	1,285	2,360	2,446	2,968
800	684	825	811	697	804	1,129	1,320	4,059	9,736	11,800
869	933	938	950	1,018	1,187	1,407	2,229	2,823	3,543	4,161
210	167	232	234	276	362	553	743	468	1,716	2,052
1,416	1,127	1,219	1,202	1,295	1,499	2,442	3,359	890	1,034	1,091
360	456	497	499	566	720	878	1,098	465	598	3,029
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,638	3,988	4,168
584	540	523	531	560	603	704	727	1,311	1,397	1,770
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
180	295	416	652	805	971	985	1,114	924	994	1,148
1,705	1,342	1,279	1,341	1,331	1,760	3,042	3,688	643	1,414	1,376
471	584	581	659	706	952	1,026	1,095	1,381	1,332	1,597
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	973	3,951	4,584	4,765
—	—	—	—	—	—	393	713	1,491	1,452	1,354
1,479	1,721	1,659	1,672	1,696	1,563	2,223	2,574	1,077	1,827	1,708
1,272	1,203	1,270	1,291	1,408	1,630	1,982	2,196	942	934	1,016
357	447	492	480	491	526	683	897	2,908	3,598	3,691
641	775	803	869	732	786	1,040	1,204	2,449	2,685	2,915
975	1,028	1,147	1,048	980	1,261	1,996	2,653	1,043	1,146	1,178
321	393	536	507	590	854	1,111	1,136	1,310	1,505	1,384
2,061	1,884	2,125	2,058	2,318	2,645	3,824	4,476	3,351	3,867	3,872
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,838	2,685	3,246
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5,300	6,008	6,267
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,054	2,279	3,202

(e) Called McMurray prior to 1962.

(f) Annexed to Edmonton in 1964.

(g) Annexed to Calgary in 1963.

(h) Called St. Paul de M tis prior to 1941.

(i) The village of Spruce Grove was "dis-organized" in 1916. It was re-incorporated as a village in 1955.

SOURCES: See Table A I; and *Annual Reports of the Department of Municipal Affairs of Alberta, 1913-1960.*

TABLE A IV

POPULATION GROWTH IN INCORPORATED VILLAGES

URBAN CENTRE	DATE OF INCORPORATION			1871	1881	1891	1901
	Village	Town	City				
Alberni ^(b)	—	—	1913	—	—	—	—
Armstrong	—	—	1913	—	—	—	—
Ashcroft	1952	—	—	—	—	—	—
Burns Lake	1923	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cache Creek	1967	—	—	—	—	—	—
Campbell River ^(c)	1947	—	—	—	—	—	—
Castlegar	1946	1966	—	—	—	—	—
Chase	1969	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chetwynd	1962	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chilliwack	—	—	1908	—	—	—	277
Comox	1946	1967	—	—	—	—	—
Courtenay	—	—	1915	—	—	—	—
Cranberry Lake ^(d)	1942	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cranbrook	—	—	1905	—	—	—	1,196
Creston	1924	1966	—	—	—	—	—
Cumberland ^(e)	1958	—	1898	—	—	—	732
Dawson Creek	1932	—	1958	—	—	—	—
Duncan	—	—	1912	—	—	—	—
Enderby	—	—	1905	—	—	—	164
Fernie	—	—	1904	—	—	—	1,640
Fort Nelson	1971	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fort St. James	1952	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fort St. John	1948	1958	—	—	—	—	—
Fraser Lake	1966	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fruitvale	1952	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gibsons ^(f)	1929	—	—	—	—	—	—
Golden	1957	1969	—	—	—	—	—
Grand Forks	—	—	1897	—	—	—	1,012
Hope	1929	1965	—	—	—	—	—
Invermere	1951	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kamloops ^(g)	—	—	1893	—	—	—	1,594
Kelowna	—	—	1905	—	—	—	261
Kimberley	—	—	1944	—	—	—	—
Kinnaird	1948	1966	—	—	—	—	—
Ladysmith ^(h)	1958	1965	1904	—	—	—	746
Lake Cowichan	1944	—	—	—	—	—	—
Langley	—	—	1955	—	—	—	—
Lillooet	1946	—	—	—	—	—	—
Marysville ⁽ⁱ⁾	1949	—	—	—	—	—	—
Merritt	1958	1911 (1965)	—	—	—	—	—
Mission City ^(j)	1923	1959	—	—	—	—	—
Montrose	1956	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nakusp	1964	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nanaimo	—	—	1874	—	1,645	4,595	6,130
Nelson	—	—	1897	—	—	—	5,273
New Westminster	—	—	1860	—	1,500	6,678	6,499
North Kamloops	1946	1961	—	—	—	—	—
North Vancouver	—	—	1907	—	—	—	365
Oliver	1945	—	—	—	—	—	—
100 Mile House	1965	—	—	—	—	—	—
Osoyoos	1946	—	—	—	—	—	—
Parksville	1945	—	—	—	—	—	—
Penticton	—	—	1948	—	—	—	—
Port Alberni ^(b)	—	—	1912	—	—	—	—
Port Alice	1971	—	—	—	—	—	—
Port Coquitlam	—	—	1913	—	—	—	—
Port Edward	1966	—	—	—	—	—	—
Port Moody	—	—	1913	—	—	—	—
Prince George	—	—	1915	—	—	—	—
Prince Rupert	—	—	1910	—	—	—	—
Princeton	1951	—	—	—	—	—	—
Qualicum Beach	1941	—	—	—	—	—	—
Quesnel	1928	1958	—	—	—	—	—
Revelstoke	—	—	1899	—	—	—	1,600
Rossland	—	—	1897	—	—	—	6,156
Salmon Arm ^(k)	1958	—	1912	—	—	—	—

TOWNS, AND CITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1871-1971^(a)

1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
—	540	702	1,807	3,323	3,947	4,616	4,783	—
—	983	989	977	1,126	1,197	1,288	1,426	1,648
—	—	—	—	—	805	868	1,154	1,916
—	—	202	218	801	1,016	1,041	1,290	1,259
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,013
—	—	—	—	1,986	3,069	3,737	—	—
—	—	—	—	1,329	1,705	2,253	3,440	3,072
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,212
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,368	1,260
1,657	1,767	2,461	3,675	5,663	7,297	8,259	8,681	9,135
—	—	—	—	714	1,151	1,756	2,671	3,980
810	1,219	1,737	2,553	3,025	3,485	4,913	7,152	7,152
—	—	—	1,350	—	—	—	—	—
3,090	2,725	3,067	2,568	3,621	4,562	5,549	7,849	12,000
—	—	695	1,153	1,626	1,844	2,460	2,920	3,204
1,237	1,179	907	885	971	1,039	1,303	1,277	1,718
—	—	—	518	3,589	7,531	10,946	12,392	11,885
—	1,178	1,843	2,189	2,784	3,247	3,726	4,299	4,388
835	783	555	538	877	965	1,075	1,114	1,158
3,146	2,802	2,732	2,545	2,551	2,808	2,661	2,715	4,422
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,289
—	—	—	—	—	615	1,081	1,213	1,483
—	—	—	—	884	1,908	3,619	6,749	8,264
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,292
—	—	—	—	—	870	1,032	1,203	1,379
—	—	—	—	—	990	1,091	1,450	1,934
—	—	131	262	722	—	1,776	2,590	3,010
1,577	1,469	1,298	1,259	1,646	1,995	2,347	2,556	3,173
—	—	374	515	1,668	2,226	2,751	2,948	3,153
—	—	—	—	418	543	744	1,022	1,065
3,772	4,501	6,167	5,959	8,099	9,096	10,076	10,759	26,168
1,663	2,520	4,655	5,118	8,517	9,181	13,188	17,006	19,412
—	—	—	—	5,933	5,774	6,013	5,901	7,641
—	—	—	—	947	1,305	2,123	2,869	2,846
2,517	1,967	1,443	1,706	2,094	2,107	2,173	3,410	3,664
—	—	—	—	1,628	1,949	2,149	2,353	2,364
—	—	—	—	—	2,131	2,365	2,800	4,684
—	—	—	—	469	1,083	1,304	1,379	1,514
—	—	—	—	807	930	1,057	1,126	—
703	1,389	1,296	940	1,251	1,790	3,039	4,500	5,289
—	—	1,314	1,957	2,668	3,010	3,251	3,412	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	862	1,079	1,137
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,282	1,163
6,254	6,559	6,745	6,635	7,196	12,705	14,135	15,188	14,948
4,476	5,230	5,992	5,912	6,772	7,226	7,074	9,504	9,400
13,199	14,495	17,524	21,967	28,639	31,665	33,654	38,013	42,835
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
8,196	7,652	8,510	8,914	15,687	19,951	23,656	26,451	31,847
—	—	—	—	1,000	1,147	1,774	1,563	1,615
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	829	1,120
—	—	—	—	899	860	1,022	1,166	1,285
—	—	—	—	882	1,112	1,183	1,426	2,169
—	—	—	—	10,548	11,894	13,859	15,330	18,146
—	1,056	2,356	4,584	7,845	10,373	11,560	13,755	20,063
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,507
—	1,178	1,312	1,539	3,232	4,632	8,111	11,121	19,560
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,019
—	1,030	1,260	1,512	2,246	2,713	4,789	7,021	10,778
—	2,053	2,479	2,027	4,703	10,563	13,877	24,471	33,301
4,184	6,393	6,350	6,714	8,546	10,498	11,987	14,677	15,747
—	—	—	—	—	2,245	2,163	2,151	2,601
—	—	—	—	771	726	759	855	1,245
—	—	446	653	1,587	4,384	4,673	5,725	6,252
3,017	2,782	2,736	2,106	2,917	3,469	3,624	4,791	4,867
2,826	2,097	2,848	3,657	4,604	4,344	4,354	4,264	3,896
—	627	830	836	1,201	1,344	1,506	1,854	—

TABLE AIV—continued.

URBAN CENTRE	DATE OF INCORPORATION			1871	1881	1891	1901
	Village	Town	City				
Sidney	1952	1967	—	—	—	—	—
Smithers	1921	1967	—	—	—	—	—
South Fort George	1968	—	—	—	—	—	—
Squamish (b)	1948	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tahsis	1970	—	—	—	—	—	—
Terrace (c)	1927	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trail	—	—	1911	—	—	—	1,360
Uclulet	1952	—	—	—	—	—	—
Valleyview	1969	1971	—	—	—	—	—
Vancouver	—	—	1856	—	—	13,709	29,432
Vanderhoof	1926	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vernon	—	—	1892	—	—	—	807
Victoria	—	—	1862	3,270	5,925	16,841	20,919
Warfield	1952	—	—	—	—	—	—
Westview	1942	—	—	—	—	—	—
White Rock	—	—	1957	—	—	—	—
Williams Lake	1929	1965	—	—	—	—	—

- Notes: (a) Includes only those centres with a population exceeding 1,000 in 1971.
 (b) Port Alberni and Alberni cities amalgamated as Port Alberni in 1967.
 (c) Re-incorporated as part of Campbell River District in 1964.
 (d) Cranberry Lake and Westview amalgamated to form Powell River District in 1955.
 (e) Reduced to the status of village in 1958.
 (f) Called Gibsons Landing prior to 1967.
 (g) North Kamloops amalgamated with Kamloops City as Kamloops in 1967.
 (h) Reduced to the status of village in 1958, re-incorporated as a town in 1965.

1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
—	—	—	—	—	1,371	1,558	3,165	4,868
—	—	999	759	1,204	1,962	2,487	3,135	3,864
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,282
—	—	—	—	589	1,292	1,557	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,351
—	—	352	355	961	1,473	—	—	—
1,460	3,030	7,573	9,392	11,430	11,395	11,580	11,600	11,149
—	—	—	—	—	520	782	1,054	1,018
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,787
120,847	163,220	246,593	275,353	344,833	365,844	384,522	410,375	426,256
—	—	305	350	644	1,085	1,460	1,507	1,653
2,671	3,685	3,937	5,209	7,822	8,998	10,250	11,423	13,283
31,660	38,727	39,082	44,068	51,331	54,584	54,941	57,453	61,761
—	—	—	—	—	2,051	2,212	2,255	2,132
—	—	—	—	3,507	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	6,453	7,787	10,349
—	—	402	540	913	1,790	2,120	3,167	4,072

(i) Annexed to Kimberley in 1968.

(j) Amalgamation of Mission District and Mission City town as Mission District in 1969.

(k) Salmon Arm reduced to status of village in 1958. Amalgamation of Salmon Arm municipality and village as Salmon Arm District in 1970.

(l) Re-incorporated as part of Squamish District in 1964.

(m) Re-incorporated as Terrace District in 1959.

SOURCES: *Censuses of Canada, 1871-1971*; *B.C. Municipal Year Book, 1952-1972*.

TABLE A V

URBAN AREAS OTHER THAN INCORPORATED VILLAGES, TOWNS,
AND CITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1971

Name	Designation	1971 Population	Date of Organization
Brocklehurst	District	8,500	1971
Burnaby	District	128,000	1892
Campbell River	District	9,933	1964
Central Saanich	District	5,108	1950
Coldstream	District	3,700	1968
Coquitlam	District	55,000	1971
Delta	Corporation	43,143	1879
Esquimalt	Township	12,895	1912
Houston	District	2,500	1969
Hudson's Hope	District	1,741	1965
Kent	District	2,861	1894
Mackenzie	District	3,500	1966
Maple Ridge	District	24,500	1874
Matsqui	District	23,248	1892
Mission	District	10,306	1969
North Cowichan	District	12,191	1873
North Saanich	District	3,593	1965
Oak Bay	District	18,364	1906
Peachland	District	1,435	1908
Pitt Meadows	District	2,781	1914
Port Hardy	District	2,500	1966
Powell River	District	13,714	1955
Richmond	District	66,500	1879
Saanich	District	66,100	1906
Salmon Arm	District	7,793	1970
Spallumcheen	District	2,076	1892
Sparwood	District	4,000	1966
Squamish	District	6,200	1964
Stewart	District	1,378	1968
Sumas	District	7,000	1892
Summerland	District	5,358	1906
Surrey	District	96,651	1879
Terrace	District	10,004	1959
West Vancouver	District	36,273	1912

SOURCES: *B.C. Municipal Year Book*, 1952-1972.

TABLE A VI

RANK OF SELECTED CANADIAN CITIES BY SIZE,
1871-1971

RANK	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971
1	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal	Montreal
2	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec
3	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto	Toronto
4	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax	Halifax
5	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John	Saint John
6	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton	Hamilton
7	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa	Ottawa
8	London	London	London	London	London	London	London	London	London	London	London
9	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston	Kingston
10	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford	Brantford
11	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines	St. Catharines
12	Truro	Truro	Truro	Truro	Truro	Truro	Truro	Truro	Truro	Truro	Truro
13	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville	Belleville
14	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec	Quebec
15	Levis	Levis	Levis	Levis	Levis	Levis	Levis	Levis	Levis	Levis	Levis
16	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton	Fredericton
17	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown	Charlottetown
18	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke	Sherbrooke
19	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope	Port Hope

SOURCES: *Centuries of Canada and Canada Year Book*.

TABLE A VII
POPULATION GROWTH IN SELECTED WESTERN CITIES,
1871-1971

CITY	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971
Brandon	—	—	3,778	5,620	13,839	15,397	17,082	17,363	20,598	28,166	31,150
Calgary	—	—	3,867	4,392	43,704*	63,305	83,761	88,904	129,060	249,641*	403,319*
Edmonton	—	—	300	4,176*	24,900*	58,821*	79,187	93,817	159,631*	281,027*	438,152*
Lethbridge	—	—	—	2,072	8,050	11,097	13,489	14,612	22,947	35,454*	41,217*
Medicine Hat	—	—	1,570	3,020	5,608	9,634	10,300	10,571	16,364	24,404*	26,518*
Monie Jaw	—	—	1,200	1,558	13,823	19,285	21,299	20,753	24,355*	33,206*	31,854*
New Westminster	—	—	—	6,499	13,199	14,495	15,524	21,967	28,639	33,654	42,835*
Portage la Prairie	—	1,500	—	3,363	3,901	5,892	6,766	7,187	8,511	12,368*	12,950
Prince Albert	—	—	—	1,785	6,254	7,352	9,905	12,508	17,149	24,168*	28,464
Red Deer	—	—	—	323	2,118	2,328	2,344	2,924	7,575*	19,612*	27,674*
Regina	—	800	1,681	2,249	30,213	34,432	53,209	58,245	71,319	112,141*	139,469*
St. Boniface	817	1,283	1,553	2,019	7,483	12,821	16,305	18,157	26,342	37,680	46,714*
Saskatoon	—	—	—	113	12,004	25,739*	43,291	43,027	53,268	95,526*	126,449*
Vancouver	—	—	13,709	29,432	120,847	163,220	246,593*	275,353	344,833	384,522*	426,256
Victoria	3,270	5,925	16,841	20,919	31,660	38,727	39,082	44,068	51,331*	54,941	61,761
Winnipeg	241	7,985	25,639*	42,340	136,035*	179,087*	218,785	221,960	235,710	265,429*	246,246*

Notes: * indicates change in census area since previous census year.

SOURCES: Institute of Local Government, *Urban Population Growth and Municipal Organization* (Kingston, 1973), Table II-1. Some of the figures for the period 1871-1901 have been derived from a variety of other, miscellaneous sources.

TABLE A VIII

URBAN GROWTH IN MANITOBA, 1891-1971

	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
Population of Province	152,506	255,211	461,394	610,118	700,139	729,744	776,541	850,040	921,686	963,066	988,247
Population Size Group	NO. OF MUNICIPALITIES IN EACH POPULATION SIZE GROUP										
10,000 - 25,000			1	2	3	3	2	5 ⁽¹⁾	5	7	6
25,000 - 50,000	1	1					1	2	5	5	5
50,000 - 100,000											1
100,000 - 200,000			1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1
200,000 +											
TOTAL	1	1	2	3	4	4	4	8	11	13	13
TOTAL POPULATION IN EACH SIZE GROUP											
10,000 - 25,000			13,839	28,218	43,789	47,533	39,235	82,819	75,345	75,345	108,293
25,000 - 50,000	25,639	42,340					26,342	55,353	154,317	167,204	167,106
50,000 - 100,000											71,431
100,000 - 200,000			136,035	179,087			235,710	255,093	265,429	257,005	246,246
200,000 +											
TOTAL	25,639	42,340	149,874	207,305	262,574	269,493	301,287	393,265	495,091	541,944	593,076
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION OF PROVINCE IN EACH SIZE GROUP											
10,000 - 25,000			3.0	4.6	6.3	6.5	5.1	9.7	8.2	12.2	11.0
25,000 - 50,000	16.8	16.6					3.4	6.5	16.7	17.4	16.9
50,000 - 100,000											7.2
100,000 - 200,000			29.5	29.4			30.4	30.0	28.8	26.7	24.9
200,000 +											
TOTAL	16.8	16.6	32.5	34.0	37.5	36.9	38.9	46.2	53.7	56.3	60.0

Note: (1) The town of Flin Flon is included in Manitoba statistics, although a portion of the town is in Saskatchewan.

SOURCE: Adapted from Tables in Institute of Local Government, *Urban Population Growth and Municipal Organization* (Kingston, 1973).

TABLE A IX

URBAN GROWTH IN SASKATCHEWAN, 1911-1971

	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
Population of Province	492,432	757,510	921,785	895,992	831,728	880,665	925,181	955,344	926,242
Population Size Group	NO. OF MUNICIPALITIES IN EACH POPULATION SIZE GROUP								
10,000 - 25,000	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
25,000 - 50,000	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
50,000 - 100,000			1	1	2	2	1		
100,000 - 200,000							1	2	2
200,000 +									
TOTAL	3	3	3	4	4	5	6	7	7
TOTAL POPULATION IN EACH SIZE GROUP									
10,000 - 25,000	25,827	19,285	21,299	33,261	41,504	30,978	47,584	39,392	41,543
25,000 - 50,000	30,213	60,171	43,291	43,027	29,603	29,603	33,206	59,686	60,318
50,000 - 100,000			53,209	58,245	124,587	162,613	95,526	247,019	265,918
100,000 - 200,000							112,141		
200,000 +									
TOTAL	56,040	79,456	117,799	134,533	166,091	223,194	288,457	346,097	367,779
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION OF PROVINCE IN EACH SIZE GROUP									
10,000 - 25,000	6.7	2.5	2.3	3.7	5.0	3.5	5.1	4.1	4.5
25,000 - 50,000	6.1	7.9	4.7	4.8	3.6	3.4	3.6	6.2	6.5
50,000 - 100,000			5.8	6.5	15.0	18.5	10.3	25.9	28.7
100,000 - 200,000							12.1		
200,000 +									
TOTAL	12.8	10.4	12.8	15.0	20.0	25.4	31.1	36.2	39.7

SOURCE: See Table A VIII.

TABLE A X

URBAN GROWTH IN ALBERTA, 1911-1971

	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
Population of Province	374,295	588,454	731,605	796,169	939,501	1,123,116	1,331,944	1,463,203	1,627,874
Population Size Group	NO. OF MUNICIPALITIES IN EACH POPULATION SIZE GROUP								
10,000 - 25,000	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	1	2
25,000 - 50,000	2					1	2	3	3
50,000 - 100,000		2	2	2					
100,000 - 200,000					2	1			
200,000 +						1	2	2	2
TOTAL	3	3	4	4	4	6	7	6	7
TOTAL POPULATION IN EACH SIZE GROUP									
10,000 - 25,000	24,900	11,097	23,789	25,183	39,311	49,121	56,359	11,417	24,879
25,000 - 50,000	43,704					29,462	65,984	88,931	95,409
50,000 - 100,000		122,126	162,948	182,721	288,691	181,780			
100,000 - 200,000						226,002	530,668	707,500	841,471
TOTAL	68,604	133,223	186,737	207,904	328,002	486,365	653,011	807,848	961,759
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION OF PROVINCE IN EACH SIZE GROUP									
10,000 - 25,000	6.7	1.9	3.3	3.2	4.2	4.4	4.2	8	1.5
25,000 - 50,000	11.7					2.6	5.0	6.1	5.9
50,000 - 100,000		20.8	22.3	23.0	30.7	16.2			
100,000 - 200,000						20.1	39.8	48.4	51.7
TOTAL	18.4	22.7	25.6	26.2	34.9	43.3	49.0	55.3	59.1

SOURCE: See Table A VIII.

TABLE A XI

URBAN GROWTH IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1901-1971

	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971
Population of Province	178,657	392,480	524,582	694,263	817,861	1,165,210	1,398,464	1,629,082	1,873,674	2,184,621
Population Size Group	NO. OF MUNICIPALITIES IN EACH POPULATION SIZE GROUP									
10,000 - 25,000	1	1	3	2	4	12	15	19	19	20
25,000 - 50,000	1	1	1	2	2	3	5	6	5	6
50,000 - 100,000						2	2	2	4	6
100,000 - 200,000		1	1					1	1	1
200,000 +				1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	2	2	5	5	7	18	23	29	30	34
TOTAL POPULATION IN EACH SIZE GROUP										
10,000 - 25,000	20,919	13,199	37,912	28,492	65,350	159,372	205,431	263,364	293,263	327,895
25,000 - 50,000	29,432	31,660	38,727	64,646	74,396	90,790	168,619	219,337	185,891	216,251
50,000 - 100,000						109,707	138,329	125,779	248,584	398,406
100,000 - 200,000		120,847	163,220	246,593	275,353	344,833	368,844	100,157	112,036	125,660
200,000 +								384,522	410,375	426,256
TOTAL	50,351	165,706	239,859	339,731	415,099	704,702	881,223	1,093,159	1,250,149	1,494,468
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION OF PROVINCE IN EACH SIZE GROUP										
10,000 - 25,000	11.7	3.4	7.2	4.1	8.0	13.7	14.7	12.2	15.7	15.0
25,000 - 50,000	16.5	8.1	7.4	9.3	9.1	7.8	12.1	13.5	9.9	9.9
50,000 - 100,000						9.4	9.9	7.7	13.3	18.2
100,000 - 200,000		30.8	31.1	35.5	33.7	29.6	26.4	6.1	6.0	5.8
200,000 +								23.6	21.9	19.5
TOTAL	28.2	42.3	45.7	48.9	50.8	60.5	63.1	63.1	66.8	68.4

SOURCE: See Table A VIII.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

There are several useful guides and bibliographies available that deal with western Canada or with one or more of the provinces that the region comprises. Accordingly, this brief note will direct the reader to these materials for further reference rather than attempt to provide a detailed listing or description of the considerable body of material that deals with the urban West.

Students of western Canadian urban development can most efficiently approach the field by consulting two recently published volumes. Alan F. J. Artibise, *Western Canada Since 1870: A Select Bibliography and Guide* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1978) is a reliable resource guide for students, teachers, and researchers. It contains more than 3600 entries and enables its users to quickly locate significant material on most topics related to western Canadian studies, including urban development. Not restricted to history, it includes materials that make it a valuable handbook for all the social sciences. The volume also contains a brief guide to western Canadian newsletters and journals, archives and libraries, organizations and societies, and specialized series. A similar format is followed in Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter, *Canada's Urban Past: A Bibliography and Guide* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981). This volume, which is organized by region, province, and city, contains more than 1500 entries on western Canada and almost 1000 "general" entries which have relevance for the study of the urban West. In addition, an extensive guide to Canadian urban studies describes and analyzes urban holdings in local, provincial and federal archives; lists urban journals and series; analyzes urban-related audiovisual materials; and describes urban organizations and agencies. The volume also has extensive author, place, and subject indexes.

Researchers seeking more detailed bibliographies should consult several specialized volumes. These include Bruce Peel's *Bibliography of the Prairie Provinces to 1953, with Biographical Index* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973) and the three-volume British Columbia bibliography: Gloria M. Strathern, *Navigations, Traffiques, and Discoveries, 1774-1848: A Guide to Publications Relating to the Area Now British Columbia* (Victoria: University of Victoria, 1970); Barbara J. Lowther, *A Bibliography of British Columbia: Laying the Foundations, 1849-1899* (Victoria: University of Victoria,

1968); and Margaret H. Edwards and John C. R. Lort, *A Bibliography of British Columbia: Years of Growth, 1900-1950* (Victoria: University of Victoria, 1975).

These comprehensive reference tools should, however, be supplemented with other volumes that include material dealing with the post-1950 period. Fortunately, several such volumes exist. For Manitoba see *Local History in Manitoba: A Key to Places, Districts, Schools and Transportation Routes* (Winnipeg: Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, 1976) and Gerald Friesen, *A Guide to the Study of Manitoba Local History* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1980). The latter is particularly useful. In addition to an extensive bibliography and guide to local archives, the volume contains detailed information on specific research themes. For Saskatchewan, the best single-volume reference is V. P. Arora, *Saskatchewan History: A Bibliography* (Regina: Provincial Library, 1973). It is currently being revised and a new edition should appear in 1981. A single-volume bibliography of Alberta does not exist, but two projects are currently under way which should fill this gap. One is an annotated bibliography of local histories of Alberta, being prepared by the Division of East European Studies at the University of Alberta. The other is an updating of Peel's *Bibliography of the Prairie Provinces*, being prepared by Professor Strathern of Library Science, University of Alberta. For British Columbia, up-to-date information can be found in the "Bibliography of British Columbia" section of each issue of *BC Studies*. This has been a regular feature of the journal since 1969.

Since western urban studies is a dynamic field, readers should be aware of two publications which note new publications on a regular basis. These are the *Canadian Plains Bulletin*, published by the Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, Regina S4S 0A2, and the Western Canadiana Publications Project *Newsletter*, published by the English Department, University of Alberta, Edmonton T6G 2E5. Both are available, free of charge, from the above addresses.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Alan F. J. Artibise is a member of the history department at the University of Victoria. He is the author of several books on Winnipeg and has edited (with Gilbert A. Stelter) two volumes: *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History* (1977), and *The Usable Urban Past: Politics and Planning in the Modern Canadian City* (1979). He is also editor of the *Urban History Review*, a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Urban History*, and general editor of the *History of Canadian Cities Series*.

Evelyn Baril completed her B.A. Honours Thesis on "The Hudson's Bay Company and the Urbanization of the Prairies, 1870-1888" for the department of geography, University of Winnipeg, in 1978. She is currently a graduate student in geography at Queen's University.

Carl Betke is an assistant professor of history at Camrose Lutheran College. He has previously taught at the University of Victoria and has done historical research in the R.C.M.P. Historical Section, Ottawa. He is currently completing his Ph.D. Thesis for the University of Alberta on "Urban Social Developments in Edmonton, 1898-1929." In 1971, he completed an M.A. Thesis on the U.F.A. period in Alberta history and has published several articles on this subject.

J. W. Brennan is a member of the history department at the University of Regina. He has published several articles on prairie history, recently edited *Regina Before Yesterday: A Visual History, 1882-1945* (1978), and is currently preparing an urban biography of Regina for the *History of Canadian Cities Series*.

Max Foran is a school principal and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Calgary. He is the author of *Calgary: An Illustrated History* (1978), and has published numerous articles on the city in such journals as *Alberta History*, *Histoire sociale/Social History*, and the *Urban History Review*.

Charles N. Forward is a distinguished Canadian geographer. He was chairman of the department of geography at the University of Victoria for many years and in 1977-78 served as president of the

Canadian Association of Geographers. His numerous publications include *Residential and Neighbourhood Studies in Victoria* (1973) and *Vancouver Island: Land of Contrasts* (1979).

John Gilpin is employed by the Historic Sites Services of Alberta Culture in the capacity of co-ordinator of the Site Designation Programme. He received his M.A. from the University of Alberta in 1978 and is now a Ph.D. candidate at the same institution.

H. C. Klassen is a member of the history department at the University of Calgary. His current research interests include a social history of early Calgary. Recent publications include two edited volumes: *The Canadian West: Social Change and Economic Development* (1977), and with A. W. Rasporich, *Frontier Calgary: Town, City, and Region, 1875-1914* (1975).

Robert A. J. McDonald is a member of the history department at the University of British Columbia. He has also taught in the history departments at the University of Victoria and Simon Fraser University. His Ph.D. Thesis, completed in 1977, was a study of "Business Leaders in Early Vancouver, 1886-1914." Recent publications include an article on the city-building process in Vancouver, in *BC Studies*.

A. A. den Otter, a graduate of the University of Alberta, teaches history at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. He has published numerous articles on western Canada and has a book in press entitled *Civilizing the West: The Galts and the Development of Western Canada*.

Paul Phillips, a graduate of the universities of Victoria, Saskatchewan and London, teaches in the economics department at the University of Manitoba. He is a specialist in the political economy of western Canada and has published several books and numerous articles on this subject.

Barry Potyondi received his M.A. from the University of Manitoba in 1978. He has collaborated on a forthcoming guide to the writing of local history in Manitoba and was editor of the 1978-79 volume of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba *Transactions*. He is currently head of Great Plains Research Consultants in Winnipeg.

Patricia E. Roy teaches history at the University of Victoria. She is a well-known B.C. historian and has published widely in this field. She recently completed an urban biography of Vancouver for the *History of Canadian Cities Series*.

H. J. Selwood is a member of the geography department at the University of Winnipeg. A graduate of the University of Manitoba and McGill, he has also studied in Australia. He is interested in the processes of urban development, particularly in respect to the role of entrepreneurs and planners and their influence on urban structure and morphology. His recent publications include articles in *Prairie Forum* and the *Urban History Review*.

Lewis H. Thomas is a member of the history department at the University of Alberta. He is one of Canada's most respected historians, having published many books and articles on western Canadian history. He recently prepared a revised, second edition to his classic study *The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North-West Territories, 1870-97*.

Paul Voisey is a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto with a particular interest in the social and economic history of western Canada. Among his publications are articles on Calgary entrepreneurs in *Frontier Calgary* and an article on prairie urbanization in *Histoire sociale/Social History*.

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